



ALIA EMORY

The image shows the front cover of a book, bound in dark blue or black cloth. The cover is decorated with intricate gold tooling. A large, ornate central medallion features a circular design with floral and geometric patterns. A horizontal banner across the center of the medallion contains the text "ALIA EMORY" in a serif font. The cover is framed by a wide, decorative border consisting of repeating geometric and floral motifs. The overall design is classic and elegant, typical of 19th-century bookbinding.

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Ada Emory.

Frontispiece.

ADA EMORY;

OR,

THE SISTER'S BIBLE.

BY

MRS. J. C. YULE.



PHILADELPHIA :
THE BIBLE AND PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
530 Arch Street.

ADA EMORY;

OR,

THE SISTER'S BIBLE.

BY

MRS. J. C. YULE.

PHILADELPHIA:

THE BIBLE AND PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
530 ARCH STREET.

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ADA EMORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE SISTER'S BIBLE.



HAT book has my little one found to read to-day?"

"I think, mamma, it is one of papa's books," answered a sweet child-voice from the other side of the room. "I found it under the study-table after he went out; and here is such a nice story. May I read it to you, mamma?"

"You read too much, Ada; but come and let me see what it is," answered the mother.

The child crossed the room with an open book in her hand, which she laid on her mother's lap. Mrs. Emory put aside the work on which she had been engaged, and, taking up the book, glanced at the faded title.

"Why, Ada," she exclaimed, "what a child

you are! This is the preacher's book—the one Mr. Wilson reads from on Sundays. What in the world can a little girl like you find to amuse herself with in a grave old book like this?"

"But, mamma," said the child, with a puzzled look, "the preacher reads out of a great big book with crimson covers and gilt leaves, and this is a little old book, not a quarter as big."

"I do not mean, Ada," answered the mother, "that it's the very same book, but it has the same reading in it."

"Are the stories the very, very same that are in this?" inquired the little girl, eagerly.

"Just the very same," replied the mother, turning over the leaves in an absent way.

"Then why doesn't he read them out, mamma?" persisted Ada. "I never heard him read them."

"Didn't you?" said the mother, looking down into the bright face lifted toward her own; "that is because little Ada did not listen, then."

"Oh yes, mamma, please, I did listen, but I couldn't tell what he was saying. He seemed so far off, and spoke right over my head so, it made me feel tired, mamma. But if he had read the

nice story I found just now, I should have heard every word of it. Please let me read it to you, mamma;” and Ada ran eagerly for her stool.

“No, no,” said Mrs. Emory, laying the book in her work-basket; “it is too small print for your little eyes; besides, the book your papa brought you last night is far nicer. Just think of the pretty gilding and the beautiful pictures, not to speak of the story itself. Every little girl must be fond of reading about Cinderella and her glass slippers.”

“But that isn’t a true book, mamma,” remonstrated the little girl; “it is just a made-up book, but this one is real true, every word of it.”

“How do you know all this, Ada?” said Mrs. Emory, looking thoughtfully at her child.

“Why, nurse said so, mamma. She said that Cinderella was a pretty story enough, but it was just made up to please children. Anybody, almost, she said, could make a Cinderella book, but God told some good men what to put in this book, and they just put in what he told them.”

“Who is God, Ada?” asked Mrs. Emory, solemnly.

“Why, don’t you know, mamma?” exclaimed

Ada, fixing her large, eager eyes on her mother's face.

Mrs. Emory's brow reddened with something like shame as she met that earnest gaze. Who had taught her little one about God? Not herself, surely. What a strange question her child had just asked! Could she answer? Was not God rebuking her through those questioning eyes for her forgetfulness of him?

"Don't you know, mamma," persisted Ada, "who God is? Why, he is God," she continued, solemnly, as if even the name awed her young spirit. She was silent a moment, and then added, "Nobody can see God, mamma, but he is everywhere—all over the world, and up in the sky. He made everybody and everything, and takes care of them every minute. He loves you, mamma, when you are good, but he is very angry when you are wicked. *You* are not wicked, though," she stammered, reddening, as if fearful she had said something wrong. "Nurse says everybody is wicked; but I guess," she continued, with a puzzled look, as she noticed her mother's heightened color, "she forgot you and papa."

"Ada," said Mrs. Emory, "you tire mamma,

talking so much. Take Rover and go in the garden for an hour, that's a dear!"

Mrs. Emory breathed a sigh of relief as she heard through the open window the ring of the little feet upon the gravel paths, and the quick, short bark of Rover as he joined in the merry play. For a while she sat quite still with her hands folded and her thoughts very busy. The artless question had startled her: "Don't you know who God is?" Again and again it repeated itself in her thoughts. She had never talked with her child about God, yet that child had just been her teacher.

But who had taught Ada? Nurse. Yet how should nurse know such things? Who had taught her that all are wicked in God's sight? It seemed very strange. Had one asked Mrs. Emory if she had a sinful heart, she would doubtless have answered, "Yes." But that she was wicked came to her very differently. Ada's timid exception of her parents from the number of the wicked had at first amused, then pained her. Were they not wicked, particularly herself? Had she not forgotten God?—forgotten him in her life, in her daily pursuits, in her instructions of her child?

Mrs. Emory lifted the Bible, and opening it mechanically at the third chapter of Romans, read: "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

"No, not one! no, not one!" She closed the book and laid it aside, but that terrible "no, not one!" rang through her thoughts, and with probing fingers seemed searching all the avenues of her soul. This startling confirmation of her own conviction of sin was unexpected. She had not been conscious of any motive in opening God's word, but the divine Spirit had caught the careless glance and fixed it upon one of the most solemn declarations of Scripture.

No, she was not, as her artless child had fancied, an exception, for "there is none that doeth good, no, not one!"

With a sadder heart than she had felt for many years before, she rose, and seating herself at the piano, sought to banish the unwelcome thoughts that crowded upon her.

Mrs. Emory, the mother of little Ada, had

spent her childhood in a sweet rural village in the west of England. Her father was the owner of a small landed estate, and with considerable ready means at his command, he had spared no pains in educating his children and fitting them for a genteel position in society. His library, though small, was graced with a plain family Bible, but for all practical purposes, it might almost as well have been unpurchased, for it was seldom read. Between his law-books and his farm, this practical English squire found little time for the Bible. Years passed away, yet the family Bible had seldom left the library shelf, except to be dusted with other books, and then replaced in its allotted niche.

His wife, as practical and worldly as he, was well content to leave the thinking on all important subjects to her husband, while she gave all her time and care to the training of her children and the management of her house. As years passed on, she had the satisfaction of seeing her daughters become all she desired—virtuous, amiable, and accomplished: religious beyond the barest outward forms she had never wished them to be.

Several years prior to the commencement of our story, the father of Mrs. Emory, having converted his property into cash, resolved to secure with what capital he possessed a small fortune in the Far West of the United States.

He accordingly set sail from Liverpool in the latter part of the spring, but when he arrived in New York he found that the cholera had just broken out in that city. Both he and his wife were smitten by the fatal disease, and the same day saw them consigned to one grave.

The sons resolved to return to England, and early in the spring embarked for their native land. Julia, the youngest sister, alone remained behind. During the winter she had engaged the affections of George Emory, a young man of rising fortunes, to whom she was duly married, and soon after found herself settled in a pleasant New England home not a day's journey from the city of Boston. A little out of the town, on an easy eminence overlooking a beautiful tract of rolling country, was situated the new home of the young orphan bride, which, from its grove of fine trees in the rear of the house, had received the name of "Beech Grove." In this pleasant home the shadows which had so

suddenly darkened her young life seemed to be lifted, but sorrow found her out even there. One lovely babe, and then another, came to gladden her home, but each, just as its charms began to unfold, faded away from earth. But in all her afflictions Mrs. Emory did not remember God, or, if she remembered him at all, it was only as one afar off, of whom she knew little, and in whom she felt no interest.

Mr. Emory was too deeply immersed in business to mourn very long the loss of his little ones, but if any permanent feeling was excited, it was one of bitterness toward God. But he was too much a man of the world to protract even this controversy very long. Grief for his babes soon subsided; the world's goods and gains soon filled up the transient void; God was not in all his thoughts.

It was a sweet Lord's Day morning in June when little Ada was born. The morning bells were ringing out their soft chimes upon the summer air when the nurse brought a tiny baby in its white robes to receive the mother's first kiss. There were roses in the window, roses clustered about the door and twined in rich festoons over the arched gateway, birds

sang sweetly in the flowering shrubbery, and chirped joyously in the great elm branches, and all the air seemed vocal with God's praise, but the mother thought of none of these things. She thought only of her little one, her treasure. Already the innocent babe had taken an idol's place in her heart: the gift was everything; the Giver was forgotten.

To the mother the infancy of little Ada passed like a troubled dream. For many months she expected to see her babe sicken and die as the others had, but as time glided on, and she saw the sweet child-life developing so hopefully, her heart grew stronger, and by the time Ada was two years old the dread of bereavement had almost passed from her mind.

Ada was not a precocious child, but she early evinced judgment and acuteness quite unusual in one so young. To a strong will she united much docility. Obedience seemed a law of her nature; and cheerful acquiescence in the wishes of all around her, a source of perpetual joy. To all these admirable qualities almost perfect bodily health gave constant and animated play.

Mr. Emory was very proud of his child; per-

haps he was, on the whole, more proud than fond, for, as we have already intimated, gold was the object of his idolatry. As Ada's childhood advanced, visions of a proud home in the metropolis, the great attraction of which should be a gay and gifted daughter, admired and praised and envied of all, often floated before his imagination, and sometimes perhaps gave a boldness and daring to his speculations of which he was himself scarcely aware.

To one so full of eager, healthful life as Ada learning to read was not a hard task; by the time she was seven years old she could read with ease. Of books there was no lack. Fairy tales, tales of enchanted castles, giants, and wonderful ladies were lavished upon her, and it was with such food that the mental cravings of the child were mostly supplied.

At length, in rummaging in her father's study, she discovers a Bible—the first Bible she has ever seen. How unlikely to human thought is it that this old book, with its dingy covers, its soiled leaves and unpictured pages, should attract a little girl not eight years old! But God carries through all these seemingly unlikely or accidental circumstances the myste-

rious thread of an unerring providence, and by the most simple means often produces the most surprising results.

Ada opens the book and reads the first twenty verses of the second chapter of Luke. It seems to her very like a fairy tale, yet it is different. Curious to learn more concerning this marvelous baby, she reads on about old Simeon taking him in his arms—about good Anna, who came in at the same time and gave thanks to God, and spoke about him to the people—about the visit to the great city of Jerusalem when he was twelve years of age—about the day's journey homeward without him, the return, the long search of three days in the great busy city, the finding of him in the temple sitting among those grave doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions.

Away she runs to her nurse, who is her confidante in all things, reads the story to her, hears her simple explanation of what is obscure, and then hastens to her mother's room, where the conversation related in the beginning of this chapter takes place.

"Julia," said Mr. Emory, seating himself at his wife's work-table while the servant was

arranging the tea-things, "where did this old book come from?"

"Ada picked it up in your study a while ago," replied Mrs. Emory, "and was greatly charmed with some of the stories, as she called them. But I took the book from her, fearing she would hurt her eyes with the fine print."

"Hurt her senses, rather!" remarked Mr. Emory, tumbling the leaves over in his hands. "Do you know, Julia," he added after a pause, "that my sister Mary, who died when I was twelve years old, owned this book? It was a prize-book, I think, in the Sunday-school, which we all, of course, attended in those days. I think you have heard me speak of my sister Mary before; she was one of the most beautiful girls I have ever known.

"I have been told that for the last year of her life she read this book almost constantly, and really it looks enough like it. When she was dying she gave it to me. The very last words she said were, 'Read it, George!' but I didn't care for it. I suppose I never read a dozen chapters in it in my life.

"When I was leaving home my good sister Jane put it in my trunk; she was very anxious

I should read it, but I didn't like it, and threw it aside years ago. I had quite forgotten I had it, till this morning I found it in a drawer of old papers, and tossed it under the table, intending to put it into the stove with the rest of the rubbish. But I forgot it, and so our young busybody has fished it up, it seems."

"Oh, let the child have it to amuse herself with," said Mrs. Emory. "It will do her no harm if she does not read it too closely, and it may, perhaps, do her some good."

"Which is very questionable," replied the husband, tossing the book back into the basket. "But come, let's have our tea, for I'm in a great hurry to go. We have a press of business just now."





CHAPTER II.

THE CHRISTIAN NURSE.

THERE was little conversation that evening at tea. Had Mr. Emory been less occupied with business cares, he might have noticed a shade of anxiety upon the face of his wife; as it was, he took his tea quite unconscious that any cloud was there.

Mrs. Emory was too much occupied with her own reflections to give much heed to the lively chatter of her little girl, who, at last, seeing her parents disposed to be silent, turned the tide of her conversation upon a handsome cat that had stationed himself at her side, and was now and then plucking at her dress for his share of food.

"I think, Mr. Frisk, you are very saucy," said Ada as Frisk, raising himself upon two feet, patted her dimpled hand with his velvet paw.

"Poor Frisk is very hungry," she continued as she petted animal with a more energetic pat reminded her that he was anxious to be served; "here is a bit of cake, and here is some nice cheese. I am sure you like cheese; don't you, Frisk?"

"There, now you're saucy again!" she exclaimed as her mischievous pet, satisfied with his meal, stole round behind her and began pulling at the ends of her sash.

"See, mamma!" laughed the little girl; "Frisk wants a sash to wear!" and sliding from her chair, she untied the pretty blue sash from her waist, and putting it round her playfellow, tied it in a large bow upon his back, then taking his fore paws in her hand, led the unreluctant animal around to her father, exclaiming,

"Papa, shall I make you acquainted with Mr. Frisk in his new sash?"

Mr. Emory looked down laughingly upon his little girl and her pet, patted the curly head of the former and stroked the soft fur of the latter, saying as he did so, "I think, now you have introduced Mr. Frisk, you had better put him out. I am afraid he is a spoiled cat."

"A spoiled little girl, rather, I fear," said the

mother, smiling. "Put him out, Ada, and then come and finish your tea."

As Ada ran to obey her mother, Mr. Emory rose from the table.

"Excuse me, Julia, if you please; I am in haste," he said. "Good-bye, little girl;" and in a moment the sharp click of the gate told that he had gone.

"Ada, why do you let Frisk into the dining-room? Do you think it nice to have a cat at table?" inquired Mrs. Emory as Ada resumed her seat.

"No, mamma," replied Ada, coloring, "but I like Frisk very much. Why, mamma, he seems to know everything I say to him; and then he can play so nicely: he never scratches or bites, not even when I tease him."

"I hope you never tease poor Frisk, Ada. But would you not rather play with your doll than with a cat?"

"Dolly, mamma, can't run, and play, and catch at strings, and eat, and purr, like Frisk. Dolly stays just where you put her, and always looks just the same way. I like Frisk and Rover and the birds, for they are alive, and can do things.

"But, mamma," continued Ada, gravely, as if a new thought had struck her, "what made my little brother George and sister May go away from this world? If they had stayed here, I should not have wanted to play with Frisk and Rover. What made them go away, mamma? Didn't they like me?"

"You were not here, my child," answered the mother, sadly.

"Where was I, mamma?"

"Why, you were not alive, Ada."

"Was I dead, mamma?"

"No, Ada, you were not dead, but you had not begun to live. There was no little Ada then."

"When George and May went away from this world," said Ada, going back to her first thought, "where did they go? I wish I knew, mamma."

"I can't tell you, Ada, but I suppose they went to a very happy place."

"Then they were good, weren't they, mamma? Nurse says God takes all good people up to heaven, and I think he takes good children there too. I wish I was good as George and May were, and then I could go up to heaven, as

they did, and see them along with the beautiful angels."

Mrs. Emory shuddered. "Ada," she said, quickly, "run and ask Margaret to take you out for a walk, and ask her to come to me for a minute before she goes."

The child ran away, delighted with the prospect of a walk, and in a few minutes the nurse, a middle-aged woman with mild blue eyes and a pleasant countenance, presented herself at the door. She hesitated a moment, seeing Mrs. Emory absorbed in thought, and then in a low tone inquired:

"Were you wanting me, ma'am?"

"Yes, Margaret," said Mrs. Emory, looking up quickly; "come in a minute, if you please. I wish, Margaret," she continued as the woman took the seat she offered her, "you would not talk to Ada about such things as being bad and being good, or about death and what comes after it. She is too young, I think—at least she is too impressible—to hear about such solemn things."

"Why, do you never talk to your child about her soul, or about sin and its consequences?" asked Margaret, with astonishment.

"No, Margaret, certainly not. As I was saying before, she is quite too young to understand those things rightly, and I very much regret you should have put so many odd fancies into her head as you have. Why, here she has been to-day asking me all sorts of questions about things that I'm sure I don't understand. You should not tell the child she is wicked and all that," she continued, looking very much hurt; "you know what a good child she is, nurse, and should not trouble her with such notions."

"I have only told her what the Bible teaches concerning those things. I am sure I am very sorry to have displeased you, but does not the Bible declare that we are all sinful in God's sight, and unless—"

"Never mind discussing it now, Margaret, if you please," interrupted Mrs. Emory; "but tell me, have you a Bible?"

"I have."

"Has Ada read it at all?"

"No, I keep it in a drawer. I did not know but she was accustomed to reading the Bible to you."

"But you have taught her more than she

has learned from the one she brought you to-day?"

"Yes, I have frequently told her Bible-stories. I have told her, too, about God, and what he does, and have taught her to repeat and understand some of his commandments. To-day she brought me a Bible which she had found somewhere, and wanted to read it to me. So, after she had read, I explained it to her, that she might understand it better. I thought it quite right," added the woman, looking earnestly at her mistress.

"I don't know that it was wrong," said Mrs. Emory, thoughtfully, "but I prefer you should send her to me, if you please, for such explanations."

"I have often talked to her, too," continued Margaret, "about heaven and the holy angels, just as I used to talk to my own little ones whom God took to himself."

The woman paused for a minute, with bowed head and drooping eyelids, under which the tears were slowly gathering, while Mrs. Emory regarded her with a look in which pity and wonder were mingled. "Whom God took to himself!" Strange words for this humble woman to

utter! Why had she never taken such consolation to her own heart when thinking of her lost little ones? All her thoughts about her departed babes had been vague and full of sorrow, but here was poor Margaret talking about her "little ones whom God took to himself," and a feeling of jealous pain took possession of the lady's heart.

"You had better leave all these things for a year or two, Margaret. Ada is not yet eight years old, you know: there will be plenty of time by and by."

"Shall I not teach her her prayers night and morning?"

"Not at present, I think, Margaret. I want to see my child as happy as life can make her, and these things perplex her, and make her too grave."

"I, too, wish to see her happy, but I cannot forget, in my desire to make her so, that there is a life beyond this. I shall, however, obey you as far as possible," continued Margaret, rising to go.

"Thank you, Margaret; I was sure you would," said Mrs. Emory, kindly, walking with her to the door, from which she watched the

quick, joyous tread of her child till she was hidden by the garden trees; then breathing a deep sigh, she slowly ascended the stairs to her own private room.

Mrs. Emory's window overlooked the pleasant grounds in the rear of the house, and commanded a fine view of the river which flowed beyond, and the blue hills in the distance. She stood for a long time gazing out upon the quiet scene, but her thoughts were not there.

The sun was slowly descending in the west, and along his golden pathway were clustering clouds of surpassing beauty. The river flashed back the softened sunlight and the landscape glowed in summer's richest coloring, but all had not power to banish the cloud that had settled upon her spirit. The childish questions of her little girl had disquieted her, yet she could scarcely tell why. Her conversation with the nurse had disturbed her deeply, and even left a tinge of bitterness in her heart. Not one of the woman's words was lost; now one and then another would flash back upon her thought, bearing with it a warning, a rebuke, or an admonition.

Then, too, there was Margaret's strong conso-

lation in sorrow. Mrs. Emory remembered all the years of patient, childless widowhood during which she had served in her family—thought of her gentle motherly ways with Ada, while all that time she had never heard her murmur at her own sorrowful bereavement. Why should Margaret be so strong and she so weak? Why should Margaret have such rich consolation in regard to her children, looking up to God, and seeing them safely folded in the arms of his infinite love, while she had seldom wandered in thought from the green sod and the sweet flowers that covered the precious dust of hers?

A thought of God—his all-seeing eye—a thought of sin, a thought of death and what is beyond, had come to her as more distinct and startling realities than ever before.

“But who, after all,” she questioned, “is this great God who created all things—who knows all things? Can he indeed look into my heart and read all that is passing there? Are people really such as to justify the words I have to-day read in the Bible? Is it true that I, with all the rest, do no good?—that ‘there is none that doeth good, no, not one’?”

Mrs. Emory tried to think of some good she

had done. Was it not good for her to have been an amiable and obedient daughter, a faithful wife, a loving mother? Could any one say she had failed in any duty or done anything for which she need be ashamed? Mrs. Emory thought she had not. But in all this she was only looking at one aspect of the case. True, she had been an amiable and obedient daughter, but it had not been because God commanded it, but because her parents required it and she loved to honor and obey them. She had indeed been a faithful and true wife, but it had not been because God required it, but because she loved her husband and sincerely wished to please him. She had been a patient and affectionate mother, but God's supreme law had furnished no motive: it was only the law of Nature binding her to her children that she had followed. She had, as yet, no true conception of that higher and broader law, comprehending, indeed, all the duties which grow out of our earthly relations, but reaching far beyond and above them to God, their great Author, and furnishing in simple, loving obedience to him the only motive which can satisfy its claims.

Mrs. Emory's meditations were unsatisfactory.

She felt that something was wrong, though, as yet, she had not clearly discovered what. She was dissatisfied with herself for the restraints she had laid upon the nurse, yet she felt no disposition to remove them. A feeling that she had in some way wronged both the child and her nurse disturbed her, and she returned to her evening tasks with the burden at her heart in no way diminished.

Margaret and her little charge walked for some time in silence. The heart of the former was too full for words; she was grieved and disappointed. What! was she no more to talk to Ada about the blessed Saviour? Was she no more to teach her the sweet utterances of prayer or to explain to her quick, discerning mind the word of God? To her eager questions was she henceforth to return no answer, and thus shut up the fountain of spiritual life from the dear child that had been almost as her own? It had never occurred to her that either Mr. or Mrs. Emory could object to the course her heart prompted her to pursue toward Ada; nay, in her simple, unaffected piety, she never dreamed but that they would be as glad to see

their child increasing in religious knowledge as she herself would be.

Margaret was grieved for Ada; she was almost more grieved for Ada's mother, for in that short conversation she had discovered what she had not before suspected—that her dear mistress was yet in the darkness of unbelief.

"Why, Margie, what are you crying for?" exclaimed Ada, whose quick eye had discerned the tears of which Margaret was herself scarcely conscious. "Are you sick?"

"No, my pet," answered Margaret, brushing the tears away and walking a little faster.

"But, Margie," pleaded the child, anxiously, "you are crying; please, what is the matter?"

"Never mind, dear!" said the nurse, taking Ada's hand in hers. "What if old Margaret does cry? It doesn't matter much, does it?"

"You are not old," said Ada, looking up into her nurse's face. "Betty, that comes for crumbs, is old, but you are not. Please, Margie," she continued, coaxingly, "don't cry."

"No, no, dear, I'll not cry any more. There! we're going to be very happy again," she added, stooping to kiss the tender-hearted child; "and now where shall we go?"

"Out in the woods where the great big trees are," cried Ada, eagerly; "you used to take me there sometimes, you know, Margie."

"Yes, Ada, I remember; and here is the stile; we'll soon be there."

They crossed the stile, and passing over a narrow strip of meadow-land, found themselves in "the woods," as Ada called it. It was a pleasant grove of beech and maple trees, which Mr. Emory kept with the most scrupulous care. It covered scarcely an acre of ground, yet to Ada it was "a big woods."

At the lower edge of this grove, and at the bottom of a green, sloping bank, a tiny brook coursed along, murmuring its low, musical chimes to the trees that bent above, and making the grass and wild flowers along its bank very fresh and beautiful. Beyond this brook the bank rose gently to a white picket-fence that separated it from the road, on the other side of which was a small cottage, at whose door an elderly man was seated weaving baskets.

Ada bounded across the brook, ran up the bank, and peeping through the fence, took a long look at the cottage and the basket-maker as he sat in the low porch at the door.



Ada Emory.

"Margie," cried Ada, running back to the place where her nurse was sitting, "I saw such a dear old man in a queer house up there. He is reading a great big book, and every little while he stops and looks up toward the sky, and then after a little goes on reading again. What makes him do that?"

"Perhaps he is praying to God, Ada."

"But he wasn't speaking, Margie."

"He could pray in his thoughts, you know."

"Could he?" said Ada, thoughtfully. "And could God tell what he said?"

"Yes, Ada, for God knows all we think."

Ada was silent. "What would he have said if he'd spoken out?" she asked.

"I can't tell, Ada, but I think he would have asked God to make him a very, very good man, and by and by to take him up to heaven."

"Is that what you ask God to do, Margie?"

"Yes, Ada, I ask him every day to make me good, so that by and by I can go live with him."

"If I ask him, will he make me good?"

"Yes, if you ask him with all your heart, Ada, and really want to do just what he tells you to do."

"But how can I tell, Margie, what God wants me to do? He never speaks out, does he?"

"He tells you in the Bible, Ada."

"Tell me, please, one thing he says in the Bible."

"He says that you are to love him with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might."

"Then I couldn't love papa and mamma at all," replied Ada, sadly.

"Oh yes, you could, Ada! This only means you should love God very much more than you love any one else—more, even, than you love yourself. But, Ada," exclaimed Margaret, hurriedly, "will you run and bring me some of those wild flowers?" She had suddenly recollected Mrs. Emory's requirement and her own promise, and she was filled with grief.

"Oh," she cried as soon as Ada was gone, "I cannot live in this way! I must leave this dear child to be guided and taught by others if in order to please I must keep God's truth hidden and evade the solemn questions she is constantly asking. I must go away and let the responsibility and the guilt fall upon those to whom they indeed belong!"

Ada soon returned with the flowers, and with-

out much more talk, the two slowly retraced their steps to the house.

Margaret undressed her little charge that night, kissed her, and without asking her to say her evening prayer, quickly withdrew to her own room. Ada noticed the omission and called after her, but the door closed and she was alone. For a few minutes she lay very still, then, rising upon her knees in bed, she began repeating the prayer Margaret had taught her.

Mrs. Emory was stealing softly to the nursery to give Ada her good-night kiss when the murmur of a voice reached her, and pausing at the door, she saw her child, with folded hands and bowed head, repeating her simple prayer.

When the little girl had finished she remained silent for a little while, and then, without changing her position, in a clear, soft voice, added: "Please, God, help Ada to love you more than papa or mamma or herself. Please help Ada to be very, very good, and then take her up in heaven to be with you always. Amen!"

Mrs. Emory stood silent and amazed till Ada had resumed her place in bed. Then she entered quietly, kissed and bade her good-night, and hastened away to her own room to be alone.



CHAPTER III.

ADA'S GREAT SORROW.

AT the usual hour the next morning Margaret was at Ada's bedside to dress her. The white curtain had been swept aside from the nursery window, and the early sunlight was stealing into the room and falling with a golden gleam upon the soft brown hair of the sleeping child. As Margaret bent over her she thought she had never loved her half so much as at that moment. It was evident that the previous night had been to the poor woman one of intense suffering, for her face was pale and her eyes red with weeping. As she gazed on the child her tears burst forth afresh, and turning quickly away, that she need not waken her, she hastened again to her own room.

"I thought I had it all settled," she murmured, in a low tone, sitting down on the side of her bed to weep. "I thought last night I under-

stood that God would have me go away, and that he would himself provide some one else to take care of and instruct my dear child. Oh! if I should be wrong in going—if, after all, I have not understood what God would have me do!"

For a few moments she wept in silence, and then, falling upon her knees, remained for a long time in prayer. When she arose the struggle was past. Her face, though deeply flushed, was very calm; she had cast her care upon God, and the heavy burden was removed.

When Ada entered the breakfast-room that morning her face had lost its usually joyous expression, and as she gave her parents their accustomed morning kiss both anxiously inquired what was wrong.

"I don't know," said Ada, nestling to her mother's side, "what makes nurse cry so much. I asked her last night, and this morning too, but she would not tell me."

Mr. Emory laughed at his little girl's sorrow, but Mrs. Emory looked almost as unhappy as her child.

"Is nurse crying now?" she asked.

"Not just now, mamma, but her face is all

swelled and her eyes are very red. She told me to ask you, mamma, if you would please come to the nursery after breakfast; she wants to see you."

As soon as breakfast was over Mrs. Emory sent Ada to feed her pets while she went to find Margaret. She found her sitting alone in the room, but she rose respectfully as Mrs. Emory entered.

"Sit down, Margaret," said the lady, kindly, "and tell me why you have sent for me."

It was some time before the poor woman could speak, but when she did so it was with the calm decision of one who had weighed well her words.

"I find myself," she said at length, "unable to obey you in respect to Miss Ada. Last night I quite forgot both your request and my promise until after I had had a long talk with her. I am sorry to have disobeyed you, but the truth is, I have been so much in the habit of both answering and encouraging her questions—"

"There is the trouble, Margaret," said Mrs. Emory, interrupting her; "I know your willingness to comply with my request, but this kind of serious talk has become a habit with you

both, and all I want is, that you should for Ada's sake dispense with it, at least for the present."

"Then, as I understand it," said Margaret, "you wish me to break off all religious talk with Miss Ada. You wish me not to tell her any more Scripture stories, or explain the Bible to her when she reads it, answer no more of her serious questions, and teach her no more prayers."

"That is just what I want, Margaret: I am glad you understand me. As I told you before, Ada is too young to hear such things; she cannot comprehend them at all. Why, only last night I heard her praying that she might die, or what amounted to that. I cannot think you taught her such language, but she has gathered it out of your talk in some way, and I want her to forget it."

"My conscience, then," said Margaret, "will not allow me to remain here as Miss Ada's nurse any longer. I cannot have the care of a child to whom I may not speak of God and holy things. Pardon me, ma'am," she added, noticing Mrs. Emory's look of amazement, "but until last night I supposed I was only teaching

her what you also taught her in some way, to love and obey God, and to know something of his will. It seems to me this should be the first lesson a child should learn."

"But you do not mean to say you are going to leave us for such a reason as this, Margaret?"

"Since I cannot obey you, I must leave you. Indeed, I dare not remain, for if Miss Ada's soul should be lost in consequence of my yielding to your wish, I should most certainly be guilty."

"What do you mean, Margaret?" exclaimed Mrs. Emory.

"I mean," she answered, in a firm tone, "that a day is coming in which God will judge the world in righteousness, and we must all stand before him and be judged for the deeds done in the body. Should I, then, let Miss Ada grow up in ignorance of her state as a sinner through compliance with your wish, and she be lost, I should, to a very great extent, be guilty for that loss. I dare not run this risk. I must leave this responsibility in your own hands."

"You speak very plainly, Margaret," said Mrs. Emory, with forced calmness; "there is

very little danger of your being misunderstood. But, Margaret," she added, after a pause, "do you really think this is such a serious matter?"

"I do indeed!" answered the woman, earnestly.

"And if Ada, a little innocent child, needs so much instruction, what do you think of me? Why, I know almost less than she does!"

"Oh, ma'am," exclaimed the woman, emboldened by the gentleness of the lady's manner, "you will come to the Lord Jesus Christ—I am sure you will—and then you can teach Miss Ada all she needs to know yourself! Oh, love the blessed Saviour," she added, while tears coursed down her cheeks; "he is the sinner's Friend, he gave his life for sinners, and he will receive you even though you have long forgotten him!"

"Margaret," said Mrs. Emory, much disturbed, "be calm and reconsider your decision to leave us. I have no wish to spare you; you have been with me a very long time, and I am not willing to lose you for an idle fancy. You will not go away from me, Margaret," she added, rising to go; "you will think better of it. Rest yourself and recover your spirits, and you will then feel differently."

“Not if you still insist upon my complying with those conditions,” replied Margaret.

“Which I certainly do,” said Mrs. Emory, firmly. “The happiness of my child is above every other consideration. But in the mean time, you must not fully decide this matter until I have seen my husband and talked with him.”

The forenoon passed away heavily enough. Mrs. Emory was more disturbed than she wished any one to know. Margaret had been with her at the birth of all her children: two she had shrouded with her own hands for the grave, grieving over them with almost a mother’s sorrow; and Ada had scarcely known any care but hers. It was a hard struggle, and Mrs. Emory trembled as she thought of the awful responsibility that was about to be shifted to her own hands. What if, after all, Margaret should be in the right? But Mrs. Emory would not think of that. Often as the thought came she would thrust it away. She feared she was wrong, yet she did not wish to know.

Ada, who knew nothing of what had passed, was too full of sympathy with her nurse, who she saw was sad, to engage in her wonted play,

but contented herself with talking to Frisk and Rover and putting her doll-house in order.

The dinner was stiff and constrained, and after it was over Mrs. Emory had a long talk with her husband in the library. She told him, as well as she was able, the whole affair, and was gratified to find he fully approved of the position she had taken.

"Let the woman go," he said, rising to leave. "Ada is getting to be a big girl, and it is time she was free from a nurse; besides, she must soon have a governess. We don't want her head filled with such nonsense, and if nurse will not promise to desist from it at once, the sooner she goes, the better."

Mrs. Emory had a kind heart, and it grieved her to communicate this decision, but she did so that afternoon.

"And now, Margaret," she inquired, after paying her her wages, "where do you intend to go? I do not want to lose sight of you."

"I have the little cottage in S—— where you found me twelve years ago. It has usually been rented, but it is just now without a tenant. I shall return to it to-morrow. It was there," she added, after a pause, "that my husband and my

children died. There was no debt upon it at the time of my husband's death, so I chose to keep it, but when my children left me it seemed too lonely, and I rented it and came to you."

"And do you not expect to be lonely again, Margaret? Perhaps you will want to come back," continued Mrs. Emory, without waiting for a reply; "if so, you must let me know."

Mrs. Emory kept Ada with her during the remainder of the afternoon, but when, at length, her entreaties to go to her nurse became too urgent to be well resisted, she told her frankly that Margaret was going away never to come back any more, and that she was at that moment packing her boxes.

"Oh, mamma!" cried the child, "let me go, do let me go, to Margie! I will coax her not to go;" and scarcely waiting for her mother's permission, she flew to her nurse's room, and flinging her arms around her neck, burst into tears.

Margaret took the little girl in her arms and endeavored to soothe her, but all in vain; her tears and sobs were uncontrollable.

"Ada," she said, after allowing her to weep and sob for a while undisturbed—"Ada, my pet, will you not listen to me? I have something I

want to say to you, and I wish you to understand and remember every word."

The child by a strong effort of will checked her sobs, and lifting her wet face from her nurse's bosom, looked at her steadily.

"Now, my darling," said the woman, "do not speak, but listen to me, and try to understand every word I say.

"Margaret is going to leave Ada because she thinks the great God who takes care of us all wishes her to go. Now, you must try and remember, when Margaret is gone, that this great God loves you a thousand times better than your poor nurse ever did—that when you go to bed and when you get up in the morning he will hear every word you say to him, and he will keep you from being wicked if you ask him, for the blessed Saviour's sake, to do so.

"When you read, in the dear old Bible you found, about that wonderful baby that was born in the manger, you must remember it was no common baby, but the Son of God, the Lord of heaven and earth, who came to live in this world and be a man, and after he had done more good than any other man ever did, let himself be nailed to the cross, and be killed, so as to save

Ada and Margaret and all who come to him from being sent to a dreadful place of punishment.

“And then after he was killed he was put in the grave, but he did not stay there, for after a while he rose up and came out of the grave, and went up into heaven, where he is just now, ready and waiting to receive all that come to him.”

Ada drew a long sobbing breath when her nurse ceased speaking, and then said softly, “I’ll read it all over and over again, Margie, till I remember every word!”

“That is right,” said the nurse. “And now, Ada, you must not cry any more. Margaret is not going to forget her little girl, but every night just when Ada is going to bed, and every morning when she is getting up, Margaret is going to kneel down all alone and ask the blessed Saviour to love her and cause her to love him with all her heart.”

Ada seemed soothed and satisfied, and when Margaret put her in bed for the last time, as she believed, and kissed her, and listened to her simple prayer, she felt that Christ would surely take care of the dear child, and in his own time and way make her indeed one of the lambs of his own flock.

The morning was scarcely clear when Margaret was up and dressed, and soon after the sound of heavy wheels at the gate told her that the carter had come to convey her boxes to the hotel where she was to take the stage-coach for S——. She stepped quietly down the stairs, so as not to disturb any one, and opening the door softly, pointed out the boxes to the man.

As soon as they were removed she returned to her room, and in a few minutes was habited for her journey. Then kneeling by the bedside where she had slept for more than eleven years, she bowed her head in prayer.

Mr. Emory and his wife did not know the fervent prayer at that moment going up to God for them. They knew nothing of the strength of the faith that was then laying hold of the strong arm of Omnipotence in their behalf. Had they known the inestimable worth of that faith, they would not so easily have spared the only Christian heart that beat under their roof.

At length she rose from her knees and passed into the little room where Ada was sleeping. The soft gray light of the early dawn filled the room, while the low breathing of the little

sleeper and the early bird-notes without were all that broke the stillness. She bent over the bed for a few minutes in silence. All the mother's heart was stirred within her as she gazed, possibly for the last time, upon the dear child of her affections. She stooped and kissed the sweet upturned face, smoothed the tangled brown hair back from the fair brow, held the limp little hand in her own for a moment, and then with a strong effort turned away.

Poor Margaret! her true woman's heart was too strong to be ruled so easily, and as she closed the door her tears burst forth anew, and she fled from the house that her sobs might not disturb the still sleeping family. She had taken leave of them all the night before; so slipping through a little private passage that led to the garden, she easily found her way through the garden gate to the street. When she reached the hotel the stage was ready, and she soon found herself moving rapidly toward S——.

Margaret, as may have been inferred from what has been related, was a woman of many and varied experiences. Her parents were

intelligent and pious, and, like most New England parents, had given their children a good common-school education. Margaret's quick intellect and studious habits had early placed her far in advance of most of her associates, while the earnest but unobtrusive piety that distinguished her youth made her at once honored and loved by all.

While yet young she was married to Thomas Allen, a young mechanic of her native village, and the first years of their married life gave promise of a happy and prosperous future. But a rapid decline soon carried away the husband, and at an early age poor Margaret found herself a widow with three little children. With the tact and energy characteristic of the women of her country, she managed to support herself and her children, till one after another of her little ones was taken from her, and before two summers had passed over her home they were all gone, and she was left in her desolate cottage alone.

It was at this period that a friend of hers recommended her to Mrs. Emory, then lately settled in life, and she gladly accepted the opportunity to secure a more cheerful home. Here devoting herself to her special charge,

she had seen but little, comparatively, of either Mr. or Mrs. Emory, and knew little of their religious character or their habits. We have seen in what way the startling fact had become apparent to her that her beloved mistress was destitute of any true knowledge of the way of life.

It was yet early when the stage, after a drive of fifteen miles, set her down at the door of her own little cottage. The cottage windows were down, the shutters closed, the grass had grown rank and thick in the little front yard, for the house had been some time tenantless; the rose bush over the window was untrained in its luxuriance, yet a few buds began to show their bright, crimson edges through the green leaves, and gave promise of what a few days of care and attention might produce.

Mrs. Emory did not waken till the usual bell for rising called her, and it was not till some-time after that she remembered there was no one to wait upon Ada. Dressing as quickly as possible, she hastened to the nursery, and found Ada sitting on the floor weeping bitterly.

"Oh, mamma," she cried as her mother

entered, "please send for Margie back again. I don't like to stay in bed so long. I don't know how to dress myself, and I am so lonesome. Please ask her to come back."

"Hush, my child," said the mother; "you are old enough to dress yourself. Come, let me see you try."

It was hard for Ada to trust to her own ability to perform this unaccustomed task, but under the directions of her mother it was finally accomplished, and she was ready for breakfast. But as she looked round her room again the thought of her loss came over her afresh, and she burst into another violent fit of weeping. Mrs. Emory tried in vain to soothe her, and was finally obliged to go down alone.

After breakfast the carriage was brought round, and Ada was made ready for a drive with her mother. The sight of the pony, the song of the birds, and, above all, the beauty of the country, soon banished the cloud from the little girl's face, but it quickly came back when on her return home she ran up to the nursery and instead of Margaret found Susan the housemaid sweeping and dusting.

She turned to the door of Margaret's room,

but was told that it was locked and was not to be opened. Choking back the tears that these words brought to her eyes, she hastened to her mother's room, but there was no one there. Susan had just put it in order, and in moving Mrs. Emory's work-box the old Bible had fallen on the floor, where it had been left lying. Ada picked it up, and remembering the request Margaret had made the previous night, she hurried away with her recovered treasure to find her mother.

"Oh, mamma," she exclaimed as soon as she saw her mother, "see! I found it on the floor in your room. May I read it a little while?"

Glad of anything that might restore her child to her wonted spirits and make her forget her loss, Mrs. Emory readily consented, and Ada, hastening away to the nursery, which was now quiet, nestled down near the window to read. For a while she read on with great delight, but at length her eyes, tired with unaccustomed weeping, grew heavier and heavier, her head drooped upon the window sill, the book slid from her hand and she fell into a deep sleep.



CHAPTER IV.

THE FALL FROM THE SWING.

WAKE up quick, Miss Ada! it's time to get ready for dinner!"

These words were uttered in the sharp, quick tones of Susan, who had been sent up to prepare Ada for dinner. "Quick, now!" she continued, as Ada, half bewildered, sprang to her feet, and seeing who was speaking to her, turned wistfully toward the room of her old nurse. "Come, now; I'm not like Mistress Margaret, going to take half an hour when five minutes will do as well!"

"I want mamma!" said Ada, her lip quivering with resentment at hearing her dear nurse spoken of so disrespectfully; "where is mamma?"

"She is below stairs with company, and she sent me up to get you ready; so, Miss Ada, you may as well hurry," said the girl.

Ada's first impulse was to be very rebellious,

for she did not like Susan, and her strong will set itself quickly against one who filled the place of her gentle nurse so roughly. But at the instant her eye fell upon the old Bible she had been reading. She remembered what Margaret had said to her a few days before about being kind to every one, and picking up the book, she slipped it under her pillow and quietly yielded herself to the girl. Susan was, however, out of temper, and she pulled Ada one way and another until her patience was exhausted too, and by the time the bell rang her usually serene face was robbed of its wonted expression, and she went down looking very red and excited. There was company at dinner with her parents, so nothing remained but to take her place quietly, and by the time dinner was over her troubles were almost forgotten.

But there had been a beginning of evil for poor Ada, and it was not to end there. In the afternoon Mrs. Emory went out with her guests, and Ada was left in care of Susan, whose stock of fretfulness was by no means exhausted. Ada could do nothing to please her. Frisk was cuffed and sent out of the house; Rover left hairs on the rug, and he too was banished;

Ada's doll-house was in the way; and by the time Mrs. Emory returned home Ada was nearly as peevish as the maid.

However, the long day wore away, and Ada's bed-time came at last. As Mrs. Emory drew the bed-cover over her little girl, kissed her and bade her good-night, Ada recollected her little prayer, and springing upon her knees, exclaimed, "Please, mamma, will you hear my prayer?"

"Mamma is in a hurry; you can say it by yourself, Ada," said the mother; and without waiting for the child to urge her request, she left the room.

There was a feeling of pain at Mrs. Emory's heart as she went down stairs to join her friends in the drawing-room, and Margaret's words came back to her with a power and significance they scarcely had when first uttered. She felt she had done wrong in not listening to her child's evening prayer, but how could she, who had never prayed herself, teach another to pray?

For a moment the awful responsibility of having a soul to train for bliss or woe rolled with terrible weight upon her, and she quickened her step upon the stair as if to escape from its gloomy presence. Then came thoughts of the

day's perplexities, of Susan's ill-temper and the effect it had had upon Ada, and for the first time she felt keenly what a loss she had sustained by Margaret's departure.

"I wish," thought Mrs. Emory, pausing before an open window, "I had let Margaret alone. It would have been better, I believe, to let her fill Ada's head with those old-fashioned notions of hers than to have her temper spoiled by such a girl as Susan. I shall see she does not spend another day like this;" and comforting herself with this thought, Mrs. Emory rejoined her friends.

Ada listened to her mother's receding step until her eyes were full of tears. There had been no pleasure for the poor child all that day. She had been irritable and cross, her mother had been almost constantly engaged, there had been no nice talks, no good Scripture stories such as Margaret used to tell her, and now, in the loneliness of her little room, she felt herself very wretched.

At length the little restless hand touched the Bible that lay beneath one of her pillows. She took it in her hand, and leaning her head upon it, tried to remember what her nurse had

said to her the previous evening, but it all seemed indistinct and confused. She looked up. The light was still quite clear in the room, and slipping out of bed, she sat down by the window and opened her book.

Shall we say it chanced to be the story of Christ blessing little children at which Ada opened? Oh no! There is no chance with God. We may well believe that his blessed Spirit often guides those who turn to his word, to such portions as are suited to their case, and the little child is ever as tenderly guided and as truly taught as they of stronger years.

“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Ada paused at these words and looked up. The sky was yet bright with the fading day, and a few stars were already visible here and there in the clear vault above.

“I wish I had been one of those little children,” she thought, gazing up into the calm sky; “I would have gone right to the Lord Jesus, too; but now he is away up in heaven.” Soon she remembered that Margaret had said if she prayed to him he would hear her, though he was not on earth, and would help her to love

and obey him. Then came thoughts about cross and unkind words, and naughty ways, and evil feelings, until tears of genuine sorrow gathered in her eyes, and dropping upon her knees beside her little stool, she asked God to forgive her and make her a good girl. Little Ada talked to Christ much as she had been accustomed to talk to her kind nurse until a sweet quiet came to her heart, and stealing back to her bed, she slept calmly beneath the care of him who "giveth his beloved sleep."

Two weeks passed by. Ada had been more under her mother's care and less subject to the caprice of Susan, who rarely failed, when she did have charge of her for an hour, to leave the traces of her own unhappy temper upon the child's spirit. Ada did not forget her kind nurse, and though she grieved for her less than at first, yet she often thought of her with a lonely craving for one who so thoroughly understood and so tenderly loved her. With the quick discernment of a child, she had discovered that such questions as she had been accustomed to ask so freely of Margaret were distasteful to her mother, and she no longer urged her to listen to her evening prayer, for in this, too,

she had perceived that her mother felt no interest. But her thoughts were busy. She had read the story of the creation, and various other portions of Scripture history so attractive to children. She had read the New Testament, too, and could understand much of the story of the life and death of our Lord. Shrinking from approaching her mother with her childish inquiries, she had learned the more to think and reflect for herself, and many and difficult were the grave religious problems which in the solitude of her own thoughts she had already striven to solve.

In the mean time, Ada's birth-day was fast approaching, and her parents had resolved to give her a party of little friends in honor of the day. A birth-day party was a new thing to Ada, and it is no wonder she looked forward to it with high anticipation. Great, indeed, to her seemed the preparations—tea in the grove, a swing on the bank above the pretty brook, the doll-house, and the picture-books to be brought out; and besides, there were to be various merry games among the trees.

On the afternoon before the anticipated day, John, the man-of-all-work, had been sent to put

up the swing; Susan had been commissioned to find a nice place for the tea-table and the doll-house, and Mrs. Emory had walked down with Ada at sunset to see that all was right.

Susan and John had been appointed to go with the children, Susan to make the tea and preside at the table, and John to look after the swing. Ada was sent to bed early, that she might be nicely rested, but it was long before she could sleep. Thoughts of the morrow, its games, its sports, and its excitements, kept her brain busy until far beyond her usual hour for sleep, and when, at last, she sank to rest, her customary prayer was forgotten.

The expected morning came at last. Ada was up earlier even than usual, and great was her wonder that everybody about the house was not so excited as herself. It seemed to her impatient heart that the slow hours would never pass away. How long it took the tardy sun to climb up the eastern sky! The old games with Frisk and Rover had been played over and over again before her mother was out of bed, and breakfast, when at last it came, never before seemed so long or so dull. After breakfast came some pretty gifts from her parents, and then a long,

pleasant drive with her mother, and so the forenoon wore away.

Ada, in her childish eagerness, had forgotten, yet there was one who had not. In her pretty cottage, with the fresh June roses looking into the open window, which the carefully-trained branches closely curtained from the beams of the morning sun, Margaret knelt by her bedside and prayed long and earnestly for her dear child.

At the appointed hour Ada was dressed, and soon after, her guests having all arrived, the little party set out for the grove. It was a lovely day, cool and fresh, and full of gladness. The birds sang joyously in the garden trees and many flowers sent up their soft fragrance upon the air. Ada thought she had never seen such a beautiful day; even the violets seemed to nod and smile at her, and the birds to be giving her welcome from every green bough.

Each little girl except Ada wore a wreath of full-blown roses: Ada's wreath consisted of buds and green leaves, which her mother had gathered and twined with her own hands and tied over her child's rich curls with a simple white ribbon.

Mrs. Emory walked with the little party down the shady path, and watched them from the gate at the back of the garden as they ran gayly across the green lawn and over the stile beyond which was the grove. "Eight years old to-day!" she said, softly, to herself, as she closed the gate and slowly returned to the house. "How quickly those years passed, and how lovely my child is grown!" A sharp pang caused her to place her hand suddenly upon her temples, and for a moment her face was crimson with pain. "Strange!" she said, a minute after, when it was past; "I do not understand these spasms of pain; I suppose they must be caused by excitement. I am sure I am quite well."

Alas! she little dreamed of the insidious foe that was working at the springs of life, and slowly but surely preparing for the sundering of those ties in which the happy mother that day rejoiced with such fullness of joy.

A merrier group than that gathered round the great swing at the foot of the grove has seldom been seen. John's strong arms grew tired at last, and he begged the little girls to try some other play for a while, but it was long before

they could be induced to give up the swing. At length they were gradually drawn away to something else, while John, climbing over the fence, sauntered off to find amusement for himself until the little party had had tea.

An hour spent at games, and another at tea, and they were again ready for the swing.

"One at a time!" cried John as two or three of the little ones, with peals of merry laughter, were scrambling into the seat—"one at a time, my butterflies; and now, away she goes!" he exclaimed, sending a fairy little form high up into the air, while the others clapped hands and laughed with uncontrollable glee.

Away, away, out quite over the little brook and in full view of the basket-maker's cottage, swept the little form back and forth, back and forth, like a white-winged bird, through the yellow sunshine, until the clamors of those who were waiting caused the swing to be stopped for another and another.

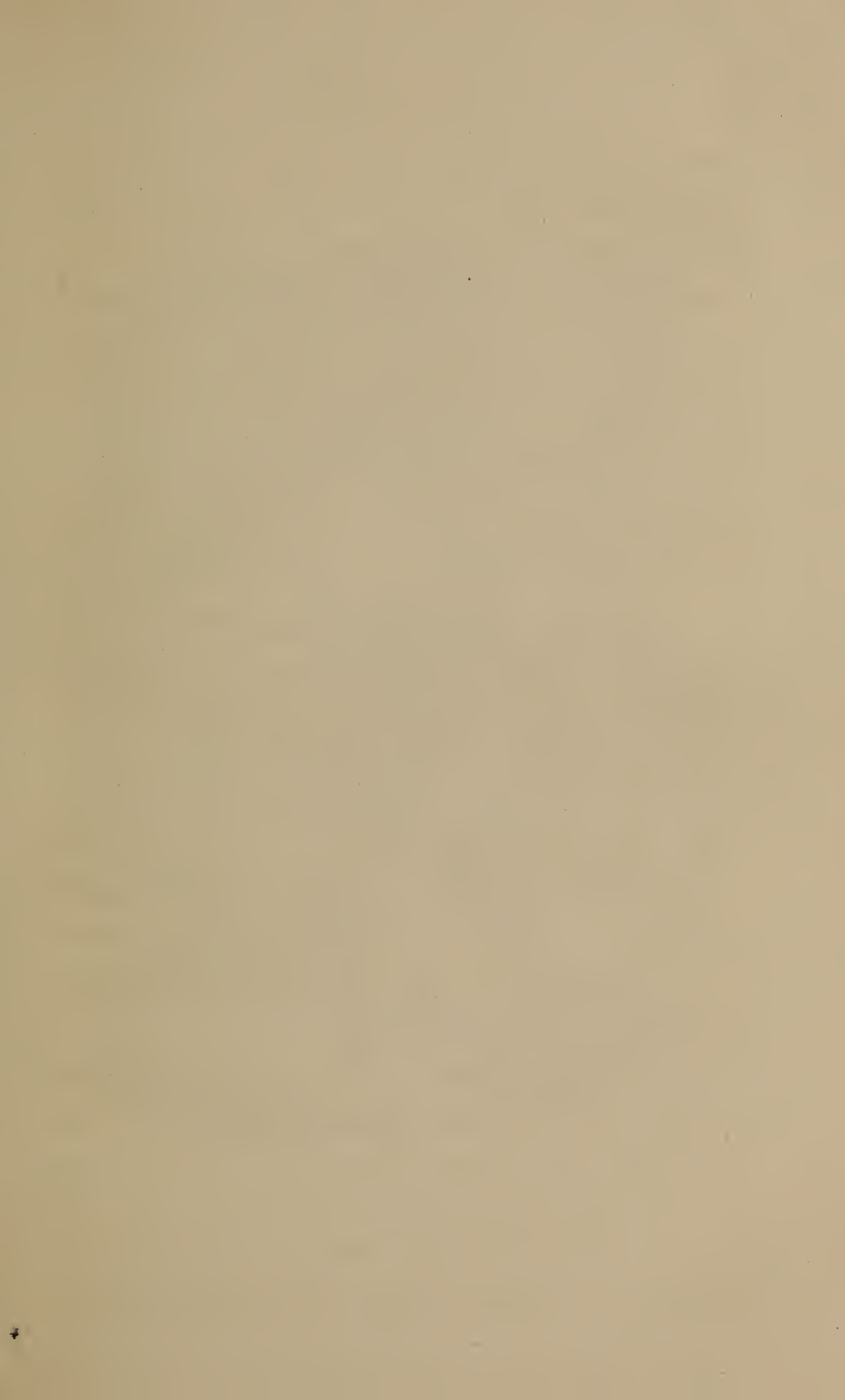
But all the time, what of the rope? was it quite safe? On the other side of the tree, and nearly opposite the place where John and the children were standing, a branch had been lopped off that was likely to interfere with the free move-

ments of the swing. The rope had been tied considerably above, but it had gradually moved down, until at length it came in contact with the splintered fragment left by the axe, and at each movement back and forth settled more and more, while the fatal process of wearing went steadily on.

It was a strong, thick rope, but the edge of the severed branch was sharp and the wood tough. In and out, in and out, moved the rope; at length one strand gave way, and the swing settled a little, but no one noticed it, and so it went on, strand after strand giving way, until only one remained unsevered.

"Now, Miss Ada, it is your turn!" cried John, and the little girl, her face flushed and her hat thrown off, sprang into the seat. "Away she goes!" cried the man, giving the rope a vigorous push, and the laughing child mounted high into the air.

Old Philip, the basket-maker, attracted by the merry laughter of the children, had crossed the road, and with folded arms was watching the swing as it moved to and fro. Slowly his eyes wandered from the little group up to the great tree to which one end of the rope had been fasten-





Ada Emory.

ed, and at length rested upon the cut and dangling strands. For an instant his tongue seemed paralyzed; then recovering his energies, he flung his arms wildly into the air and shouted, "Stop!" But his cry was unheard by the excited children below. "Stop! stop!" he shouted again, but John had just given the rope a more violent push than ever, and away flew Ada high, high up into the air, when with a crash the last strand gave way, and the little girl was hurled violently from her seat and dashed almost at the very feet of her bewildered playmates. A wild shriek burst from the children as they rushed forward, but Ada did not speak or stir. There she lay in a little heap, her white dress tossed about her like new-fallen snow, utterly unconscious of the frantic excitement of the children, who were screaming around her.

John stood quite helpless for a moment, and then recovering himself, rushed forward just as the old man, who had cleared the fence at a bound, was gathering up the inanimate little form in his arms. Susan, who had been watching the children from a little distance, uttered a piercing shriek when she saw the child fall,

and without waiting to see whether she was alive or dead rushed like the wind toward the house.

Mrs. Emory was just putting on her shawl to walk to the grove when Susan, her face wild with terror, rushed into the hall, and exclaiming, "Miss Ada!" fell to the floor in strong hysterics. Mrs. Emory looked an instant at the girl, and then ringing violently for a servant to look after her, hastened as fast as her trembling limbs would carry her to see what had befallen her child.

Old Philip lifted Ada tenderly in his arms, and sweeping back the tangled curls, revealed a deep cut on the side of her head, from which large drops of blood were falling.

"I fear she is dead!" he said, with a shudder, as he looked down into the white face. "Be quiet, little ones!" he continued, gently, to the children, who were crowding upon him; "see, we will wash away this blood, and then perhaps she will open her eyes." He knelt by the brook, and carefully washed the wound and poured water over the pale face, while John, quite unmanned, stood over his little favorite weeping bitterly. For some minutes Ada lay like one

dead, but at length the cool drops revived her, and she opened her eyes.

"Thank God!" said the old man, fervently, as she looked up in his face; "my sweet child, are you much hurt?"

Ada did not answer, for she had caught sight of her mother, who, as soon as she came in view of the dangling swing, had comprehended all.

"Ada, my child," she exclaimed, bending over her, "do you know me?"

"Yes, mamma," said Ada; "I am not much hurt. Don't cry, mamma!"

Mrs. Emory took her child in her arms, and having ascertained that no bones were broken, bound a handkerchief around the wound and called John to carry her home.

"Please, mamma," said Ada, looking at the basket-maker, who was standing by, "can't he carry me? I like him; he is good!"

Mrs. Emory looked up, and for the first time seemed to notice the man.

"I thank you," she said, extending her hand, "for your care of my child; will you have the goodness to walk with us to the house? My little girl seems to have a fancy for you to carry her."

"I will, most gladly," he said, lifting Ada tenderly in his arms.

Mrs. Emory followed, leaning upon John, and the children, now quite reassured, came after. On reaching the house, Mrs. Emory with a few pleasant words dismissed the anxious children, and then led the way into her own parlor, where Ada was laid on a couch, and John was despatched at once for Mr. Emory and a physician.

The old man stood silent while these orders were being given; then turning to Mrs. Emory,

"Madam," he said, "God has been very merciful to you to-day in sparing your child. Shall we not thank him?"

Mrs. Emory would have said "Yes," but her lips quivered, and she bowed her head. The man knelt at the head of the sofa, and in a few impressive words thanked God for his great mercy, and prayed that the little one so graciously preserved might live to glorify him.

Ada did not take her eyes off his face while he was at prayer, and when he bent over her to bid her good-night, she said very softly, "I knew you were good; will you please come again?"

"I am not good, little one," said the man,

"but God is good, who has kept you alive to-day. Cannot you thank him?"

"I will try," said Ada, closing her eyes wearily.

Mrs. Emory showed the old man to the door, and, thanking him again, begged him to call again in the morning, when she hoped Ada would be much better. Soon afterward the physician arrived, and after a careful examination concluded there was no danger except from the shock her nervous system had sustained.

"It is possible," he said, when taking leave, "that brain fever may result from this, and if there is the slightest appearance of fever during the night, summon me at once."

Ada soon fell into a quiet sleep, but before midnight symptoms of fever appeared. The physician was speedily called, and during the rest of the night watched with the parents by the couch of the little sufferer.

"Is this Margaret she is fretting so much for, the nurse I used to see here?" inquired the doctor, after they had listened for some time to Ada's incoherent expressions.

"It is," replied Mr. Emory; "she left us some time ago."

"Where is she now?"

"She resides at S——, some fifteen miles away."

"You must send for her at once, then," replied the doctor. "Your child's recovery depends greatly upon her being kept quiet, and this fretting is wearing her out."

An hour after, a trusty messenger was hastening to S——, and before noon the next day Margaret was again at Beech Grove. She had not thought, as she bade adieu to the old familiar places that still May morning, that before the end of June she would be brought back, perhaps to see her child die. She did not stay to speak to any one, but hastened to Ada's bedside. Mrs. Emory made room for her as she approached the bed, almost feeling, as she did so, that the return of her faithful nurse was the pledge of her child's recovery.

"Ada, my lamb," said Margaret, stooping over her, "don't you know me?"

Ada looked up, seemed for a moment to recognize her, and then relapsed into her former state.



CHAPTER V.

THE OLD BASKET-MAKER.

FOR several days the fever seemed destined to baffle both the physician's skill and the nurse's care, but at length, through the blessing of God, it was subdued, and Ada was saved.

"I think, madam," said the doctor, a few days after Ada was able to sit up, "that I may discontinue my visits now. I have full confidence in our excellent nurse here, and Miss Ada herself is going to be very careful."

Ada smiled as the doctor peeped playfully at her over his spectacles.

"I shall come in sometimes, you know," he added, putting on his hat, "just to see if you are a good girl. So good-bye for the present."

"You will not go away, Margie?" said Ada, looking at her nurse. "You will stay with me

always, won't you?" she continued, coaxingly, for Margaret did not answer.

"Say 'Yes' to her, Margaret," pleaded Mrs. Emory. "Indeed, you must not leave us again. Do you know, Margaret," she continued, after a pause, "that I very much regretted your going away? Somehow, I fear I was wrong in the matter, but it was the sincere, though perhaps mistaken, desire to see my child happy that influenced my decision."

"If you would allow me," said Margaret; and then she paused, for it seemed to her too much to hope that the restraints upon her intercourse with Ada might be removed.

"Come with me, Margaret," said Mrs. Emory, leading the way into another room and closing the door. "You may," she resumed, when they were alone, "talk freely with Ada upon religious subjects, and instruct her in whatever the Bible teaches; and oh, Margaret," she added, bursting into tears, "teach me too, for I am so blind and ignorant!" Margaret's astonishment and joy prevented any reply, and Mrs. Emory went on: "The day Ada was hurt I felt so glad and proud, so secure too, that I never once thought of any danger. It did not occur to me that

harm could come to Ada, or that I could lose her. I fancied her growing up to be more and more my companion and my friend—fancied her lovely and accomplished, the pride and ornament of my home—but I never once thought she could die. But in a little while there came that dreadful accident, when she was so nearly snatched from me, yet when I saw her alive and able to speak to me, I did not remember that God had saved her. I was not grateful to him as her preserver, and it never came to my mind that he had anything to do with her safety until that old man whom you have seen here every day since your return asked if he should not give God thanks.

“Oh, Margaret, had he struck me, I could not have been so hurt, and when he knelt down and prayed, every word seemed to go like an arrow to my heart. ‘How strange,’ I thought, ‘for him, an utter stranger, to think of thanking God for preserving my child, while I, whose life is bound up in hers, have not once thought of it!’ And then I tried to thank God, too, but my heart had no thanks. I do not think I believed he had preserved her. It seemed to me it just happened that she escaped, and when the

old man went away I felt almost angry with him for making me think about God at all.

“My thoughts even accused him of impertinence in offering prayer in my house without being invited to do so, yet it seemed to me I had never heard a prayer before. Every word he had uttered was like some living thing sent to torture me, and all the evening, even while Ada slept and seemed to be doing so well, burned at my heart like fire.

“But when the fever came, all my trouble was for her. I thought she would die, and my heart then rose in terrible rebellion against God, for I believed he was taking her away from me, and I almost hated him. I could easily believe he was snatching her from me, though I had been unable, when I fancied her safe, to believe he had preserved her life.

“Every day the old man came to ask after her, and at every call he would say, ‘Thank God that she still lives!’ One day, when Ada was at the worst and I had scarcely the faintest hope of her recovery, the bitterness of my heart broke forth.

“‘You thank God,’ I said, ‘every time you call, that my child is alive, and I suppose I

thank him, too, but what would you say if she were dead?’

“I don’t know, Margaret, how I uttered that dreadful word, but it seems to me I was nearly mad. The man looked at me with a countenance full of surprise, and then, with a little hesitancy, said: ‘I should thank him still, I think.’

“‘Thank him still!’ I almost shrieked, for it seemed to me he was more mad than I.

“‘Yes,’ he answered, with a pitiful look, ‘I should thank him still.’

“‘And that,’ said I, ‘is because you know not the anguish of such a loss. Had you lost a daughter such as mine, you could never say those words again!’

“For a minute, Margaret, his face grew very sad, and his lip quivered, but presently he spoke again in his own calm way:

“‘I once had two lovely little girls, one so much like yours that it almost seems, when I look at her, that my own has come back to me again, the other older and lovelier, but God took them both, and I thanked him that he had removed his little ones from the sin and temptation of this wicked world, and borne them ten-

derly to the arms of Jesus, never to sin or suffer again.'

" 'His little ones!' I cried, bitterly; 'were they not your own? is not my child my own? Can he of right do with our children as he wills?'

" 'He can,' answered the old man, meekly, 'for his will is always right. He who gives may, if he sees fit, recall. He only lends us his little ones that we may train them for his glory; and when he sees us turning upon them the love that belongs to him only, he will remove them both for our good and theirs, seeking thus to draw our thoughts after them up to himself.'

" 'But suppose,' said I, 'we do with our children precisely as he would have us; does he never take them away?'

" 'Yes,' said the man, 'and frequently we cannot see any reason for what he does; for his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor our ways his ways. But, dear madam,' said he, 'we may always trust him, for he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.' So, whether your child lives or dies, God is just and right, and deserves our thanks.'

" I could not listen to him. I had no heart for what he said; but day after day, as he spoke

to me so modestly and so wisely, I began to see how much wrong and rebellion had been in my heart, and ever since I have been feeling more and more my need of divine illumination.

“I want to know this new way of thinking and feeling, which I now see is so much better than my own. I have gained light enough to see my darkness, and that is about all. Stay with me, then, Margaret, and talk to me just as you do to Ada, for I want to learn.”

“Thank God!” exclaimed Margaret, wiping away the tears that were trickling down her cheeks; “he has heard my prayer for both you and Ada, and he will surely hear yours too. Oh, go to him with all your burden, for he has promised that they who come to him he will ‘in no wise cast out.’”

A knock at the door interrupted the conversation. It was the basket-maker, who had called to inquire after Ada. He brought in his hands a pretty little basket of curious workmanship filled with fresh flowers from his own little garden.

“May I give it to her myself?” he asked, hesitatingly, as Mrs. Emory extended her hand to take it.

"Oh yes," said the mother; "my child is quite able to see you now;" and leading the way she ushered him into the room where Ada was sitting in a great chair supported by cushions.

"See, darling," said Mrs. Emory; "here is the good man who brought you home in his arms; do you remember?"

"Oh yes, mamma," said Ada, her face brightening. "I am so glad you have come," she said as old Philip sat down and took her thin hand in his.

"And I am very glad too, my little one, to see that you are so much better. See what I have brought you this morning; will you have it?"

"What, all?" said Ada, eagerly—"the pretty basket and the flowers too?"

"Yes," said Philip, "it is all for you."

"Oh, thank you!" exclaimed Ada, taking the basket in both her hands; "but did you make it just for me?"

"I made it on purpose for you, but I did not make the flowers."

"You could not make flowers," said Ada, looking up with a little laugh.

"But isn't the basket as curious as the flowers?"

"It is very curious," said Ada, turning it round in the light, "but nobody could make real flowers but God."

"That is very true, my child; none but God could do that; and one flower is more wonderful than all the baskets in the world. I made this basket, but I had to learn how; and even after I had learned I had to try and try again before I could make one nearly so nice as this. But God is so wise he made the flowers all perfect at once, and the first one he made was just as nice as the last. He did not have to learn how at all, neither did he have to try and try, like me."

Ada looked at the man as he was speaking, and then at the flowers.

"Do you love God?" she asked, lifting her eyes to his face.

"Yes, my child, I love God, and I want you to love him too. Can you tell me anything he has done for you for which you should love him?"

"I think so," said Ada, thoughtfully. "He made me, and keeps me alive, and gives me

everything I have, and I think it was he that kept me alive the day I fell, wasn't it?"

"It certainly was," replied Philip.

"But what was it you said," asked Ada, after a little pause, "that day when you knelt down by the sofa and said a prayer?"

"Do you remember anything I said?"

"I think you thanked God for letting me live, and asked him to make me love the Saviour, didn't you?"

"Yes," said the old man, rising; "but I must not make you talk any more: you are not strong enough yet. By and by, when you are quite well, we will talk, perhaps; now you can think about God and how good he has been to you."

"Are you going?" said Ada, looking anxiously after him as he turned away.

"Yes," he answered, pausing.

"Is there anything you want, Ada?" said her mother.

"Yes, mamma. Ask him, please, to kneel down by me and say what he said that day."

"She wishes you to pray with her," said Mrs. Emory, with a deep flush upon her face.

The old man paused for a moment, and then coming nearer to Ada's chair, he knelt down.

Mrs. Emory and Margaret followed his example, and again the voice of prayer was heard in that sick room. When the prayer was over the old man went quietly away, Mrs. Emory retired to her own room, and Margaret and Ada were left alone.

Ada recovered slowly—so slowly, indeed, that the autumn was far advanced before she was able to play and study again as formerly. In the mean time, the little cottage in S—— was again rented, and Margaret was once more occupying her old place and quietly performing her accustomed duties at Beech Grove.

Mr. Emory reluctantly gave consent for Margaret to remain. What his wife told him concerning her religious character prejudiced him, and it was only at Mrs. Emory's earnest entreaty that she was allowed to remain in the family.

"She will be putting all sorts of notions into the child's head," said Mr. Emory, "but if you think her remaining so very desirable, Julia, let her stay for a while. In a year or two Ada will require a governess, and then she must leave."

Mrs. Emory did not answer. She felt that the stay of such a truly Christian woman was as important to herself as to her child, but she did not say so. She had not courage to speak to her husband of her own feelings, but as he left the room she breathed a sigh of relief. It was settled, then : Margaret was to remain ; and she resolved that from that hour her own first business should be to find out the secret of Margaret's and old Philip's faith, and to feel in her own experience what it was to know no will but God's will.

But how was this to be done ? Her husband, she well understood, would feel no sympathy with this new anxiety or this new purpose. Hitherto, they had been equally careless about religious things, but Mrs. Emory had been careless more because she was ignorant than from any clearly-defined hostility to the truth. Her husband, on the other hand, had early shut his heart against the counsels and prayers of pious parents. The Bible, the parting gift of a sainted sister, he had at first neglected, then despised and cast from him ; gradually he had learned to scoff at religion, and finally had settled down into a thoroughly worldly man, while deep in

his heart, waiting only causes sufficient to rouse it to activity, was an actual hatred of both Christianity and the Bible.

Mrs. Emory understood all this; she felt that with each step she took toward Christ a gulf of separation between herself and her husband was opening wider and wider, and that the nearer she drew to the truth, the farther she receded from him. Sometimes, as this consciousness dawned upon her more and more clearly, she would lay aside the Bible or other religious book she was perusing, and covering her face with her hands, weep bitter tears.

"Oh, I cannot leave him!" she said one day to herself after a season of mental suffering. "Surely, if there were need for all this anxiety he would be anxious too! Why cannot I be like him—be as I used to be? Why all this strife and struggle which bring no reward and always leave me where they found me, or rather which always bear me farther and farther from him?"

Her Bible was lying open on the table beside her, and as these thoughts were passing through her mind her eyes fell upon its pages, and she read: "He that loveth father or mother more

than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me cannot be my disciple."

"This is indeed a strait and narrow way!" thought Mrs. Emory, closing the book. "How can I ever walk in it? Can I ever give Christ this supreme place in my affections? Can I follow him alone, perhaps laughed at, an object of contempt, possibly of dislike, to my husband? Oh what shall I do!"

She had mechanically lifted the book from the table again, and was holding it open in her hand. It had opened at the place where she was reading before, and glancing at it again, she read: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. And whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Mrs. Emory shuddered. "And must it come to this?" she thought. "Though I do not love Christ, yet I could not bear to be denied by him—to be cast out for ever from his presence!"

She read on: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at

variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

"Alas!" thought Mrs. Emory, bursting into tears, "this religion brings no peace or rest. It only brings divisions of families, the sundering of ties, and the breaking up of the tenderest interests."

Suddenly there came to her thought a sweet passage which Ada had read to her the day before, and which she had copied into her pocket-memorandum. She drew it forth, and read: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"I see," she exclaimed aloud, "how it is! There may be outward troubles, but there shall be inward peace. Outwardly there may be bitter conflicts and tears, but inwardly there shall be the serene repose of the soul upon Christ."

Mrs. Emory fell upon her knees and prayed. She prayed for peace, but peace did not come. Her prayer was selfish. She was asking the reward without the sacrifice—asking for peace

while her will was not given up to God's will—asking for peace while she was neither ready nor willing to give up all and follow her Redeemer.

So the strife of spirit went on, but she carefully concealed it all from her husband. She was ashamed to confess Christ before men. Sometimes she thought of seeking counsel of her minister, but for years she had attended the services of the church in which she was reared but seldom—so seldom, indeed, that she scarcely knew her minister except when she saw him in the pulpit. How, then, could she seek private instruction from one by whose public ministry she had been so entirely unprofited? She shrank from this inconsistency, as she regarded it, but resolved to become a regular attendant at church, and to give much of her time to the study of the Scriptures, and to prayer.

Accordingly, the old Bible which Mr. Emory long before discarded became the daily study of his wife and little daughter, while Margaret, who always joined them, gave material aid to Mrs. Emory in her search after the true meaning of God's word.

But the more she attended church, and the

more she read, the more her difficulties increased. She listened to the sermons that were preached on the Lord's Day and joined in the service, but the one she seemed unable to comprehend, and in the other she felt herself unfit to engage. The words she uttered seemed ever to condemn her, and she always returned home feeling her burden heavier than when she went.

During this season of perplexity she often thought of her old friend, the basket-maker, who had spoken to her so faithfully at the time of Ada's illness. But he had only called once since the day he brought the basket of flowers, and Mrs. Emory did not know where he lived, that she might call on him herself.

"Margaret," she said, one day, as the early spring was coming on, "do you know where the old man lives who brought the basket of flowers to Ada when she was ill?"

"I know, mamma!" cried Ada, springing up from her play so suddenly as to toss all her pretty toys into a mass of glittering confusion.

"Well, where is it?" said the mother, smiling at the child's eagerness.

"It is just over the fence from where I fell, mamma."

"Could you go and show Margaret?"

"Yes, mamma, but there's no gate through the fence."

"I know the way by the road," replied Margaret; "I have often passed his cottage."

"That will do, then," said Mrs. Emory; "you may take Ada with you, and go and ask him if he will call on me this afternoon. I am very anxious to see him."

Ada's delight was unbounded. Her cloak and mittens were soon on, for the weather was still cool, and she was hurrying her good nurse along the road which led to the old man's cottage. It was reached after a few minutes' walk, and Margaret rapped at the door, which was quickly opened by the basket-maker himself. He recognized Ada at once, and with a look of pleased surprise he gave a hand to each and led the way into the cottage.





CHAPTER VI.

THE BASKET-MAKER'S VISIT.

AND how is the little one?" said Philip, drawing up seats for his visitors before the ample fireplace, in which a warm wood-fire was burning.

"I am very well, thank you, sir," said Ada.

"And quite recovered from the long sickness of last fall?" he asked, but Ada did not answer, for her eyes were fixed upon a beautiful painting over the mantel-piece with which her attention seemed wholly occupied.

"Quite recovered, sir," said Margaret, answering the question for Ada.

"I am very thankful," he answered, in a low tone, as if unwilling to divert her attention from the picture, and then, with a sad expression, his eyes also wandered to the painting. It was a piece of exquisite workmanship, evidently the production of a master. It represented a very

beautiful woman in a sitting posture, and two little girls. The one was standing at the lady's side with one arm resting upon her shoulder, and with the other hand lifting a golden curl from the neck of her little sister, who was kneeling by the mother's lap, holding a book from which she had just raised her eyes with a look of the most affectionate trust. The expression of each countenance was so lifelike as almost to make one feel that they were ready to speak.

Ada rose to her feet, and stepping nearer, looked at the picture for some time in silence; then turning to the man, she asked abruptly, "Who are they?"

The question seemed to take him by surprise, but after a moment's hesitation, he answered: "It is a lady and two little girls, one almost like you, it seems to me, the other a few years older."

"Do they live here?" asked Ada, her eyes again turning toward the picture.

"No," replied Philip.

"Where do they live?" persisted Ada. "I want to go and see them, they are so beautiful!"

"They live in heaven, I trust," he answered, softly. "They have all gone to live with the Lord Jesus Christ. You and I cannot go to see them now, but by God's mercy perhaps we will some day."

Ada's large eyes grew more earnest as she gazed in the old man's face, and she was about to speak again, when he turned aside, and picking up a bit of willow, appeared to be busy. Margaret noticed his emotion, and said in a low tone to Ada,

"You must not ask any more questions, dear; look at this pretty basket."

Ada was too well instructed to question more, but she was not satisfied. She stood, while Margaret was doing her errand, gazing at the painting, and it was not until she was twice reminded that it was time to go that she turned from it. Philip led the way to the little gate, and as he bade them good-morning, he said to Ada,

"Come and see me again, little one, and perhaps some time when you are grown older I will tell you about the lady and the two little girls."

"Oh, will you?" exclaimed Ada, with a

bright smile. "Thank you; but will it be long?"

"Perhaps it may be pretty long," replied the man, "but you can wait, I think."

"I will try," said Ada, and full of the hope of having her curiosity gratified at some future time, hastened home to tell her mother what she had seen.

"I wonder what she can be wanting of me?" thought Philip as he locked the door of his cottage and walked toward Mr. Emory's residence. "Probably to give some order;" for, thought he, "What else can a fine lady want of a poor old man like me?"

Mrs. Emory met him at the door, and with a kindly greeting led the way to her own little parlor. Ada was sitting at the window doing some work that her mother had prepared for her, but as soon as she saw who was coming she bounded forward, and giving a hand to the old man, led him to a seat. But a look from her mother reminded her that the visit was not for her this time, and she quietly retired to her seat by the window.

Philip uncovered his head as he entered the

room, and with an air of quiet dignity took the seat that had been placed for him. There was something in his manner and bearing which showed that he had been accustomed to better fortunes, and a glance at his fine, intellectual face would have satisfied a careful observer that he was a man of both taste and culture.

There was a look of deep sadness in his dark eyes and a tenderness and pathos in his tones that told of sorrows which had left upon him their ineffaceable traces, but of those sorrows no one but himself knew. For years he had occupied his little cottage alone, and even his name had almost ceased to be matter of inquiry. "Old Philip the basket-maker" was the only title he bore, and even meddlesome curiosity seldom sought for anything farther.

"I fear, sir," said Mrs. Emory, seating herself beside the little work-table, "that I have put you to trouble by asking you in to-day. But," she added, with a slight tremor of voice, "I have been for a long time very solicitous about religious things, and as I have already profited very much by your conversation, I have taken the liberty of sending for you again. I want you to tell me about your religion, and what I must

do to obtain it, for I truly desire to be a Christian."

Ada had laid aside her work as her mother began to speak, and lifting her stool, she came softly to her mother's side, and sat down by her to listen. Since her sickness she had talked much with both Margaret and her mother, and her ideas of religious things had become greatly enlarged, while her mind, which ever turned so ardently toward truth, seemed to glow with intense delight whenever any opportunity occurred to hear or talk about Christ.

"I rejoice indeed, madam," said Philip, modestly, "that you should desire a more thorough knowledge of the way of life, but I am surprised to learn that anything I have said should have been profitable to you."

"Let me go back," said Mrs. Emory, her hand resting tenderly upon Ada's shoulder, "to the day when my child was hurt. At that time I knew nothing of gratitude to God for his mercies, and I had no correct ideas either of his providence or his grace; I was living in my sins, at my ease, secure, and, as I thought, happy.

"It is true, some things had transpired that had roused me to reflection, yet I had been but

a little disturbed, and I believe the enmity of sin was excited by what I had heard and thought to even more than its wonted strength.

“But the accident that befell my child, and her subsequent illness, were blessed by God in opening my eyes and revealing to me my own sinfulness and ingratitude.

“What you, sir, said to me from time to time concerning God’s providence, his dealing with his creatures, his absolute right to all we call ours, as well as to our entire love and obedience, was at first very distasteful to me.

“Your words found no response in my cold, selfish heart, but gradually I came to see and feel their force, and with my judgment, if not with my heart, to acquiesce in them.

“Since then I have been earnestly, though vainly, seeking to find that rest and peace which you and others seem to know so perfectly.”

“Rest and peace, my dear madam,” said Philip, “are found only when the soul comes to know Jesus Christ as a Saviour and is placed in harmony with God—in other words, when God takes away the selfishness and stubbornness of our wills and brings them into subordination to his own.”

"I think," said Mrs. Emory, "I felt the opposition of my own will to God's will most fully when my child was so ill. I thought she was going to die, and my whole soul rose in rebellion against God, and I cannot even now understand how any soul can under all circumstances say with sincerity what Christ taught his disciples to say: 'Thy will be done!'"

"But he said it himself," replied Philip, "many times, and under circumstances of more bitter trial than we can ever know, and in all things he is our example. What he was able to do in the face of the most dreadful agony, he will by his Spirit enable us to do under our severest trials if we only seek his aid.

"I often think," continued the old man, after a pause, during which Mrs. Emory remained silent and thoughtful, "that the soul is like a musical instrument. Once it was in full accord with heavenly music, and all its vibrations were sweet and harmonious. But sin came and put it all out of tune, and now there is not one chord that does not give forth harsh discord toward God, and will continue to do so until his Spirit has put it again into harmony with himself. But this he engages to do for us, and when it is

done, his will becomes our will, his way is for us the best way, his plans and purposes the only ones with which we will or can be satisfied."

"I think I understand you," said Mrs. Emory. "Your comparison seems to me very appropriate, and I feel my soul to be full of these discords whenever I turn toward God. But will you tell me how it can be restored to harmony? That is what I am above all else anxious to learn."

"Just put it into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for our transgressions; he was raised again for our justification; he ever lives to intercede for us, and his Spirit is constantly waiting to aid us in all our approaches to God through him. Then come and let him do for you what sin has made you unable to do for yourself. You have tried to make yourself better, have you not?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Emory, "and have always failed. So far from feeling that I am better, I seem to be constantly growing worse, until I am afraid even to pray: it seems to me God must both despise and hate me."

"That," said Philip, "is a temptation of Satan. Do you believe God's word?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Emory, "I trust I do."

"Well," continued he, "Jesus says he came 'not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.' He says, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' He says, 'Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.' He will save 'unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.'"

"I think," said Mrs. Emory, sadly, "that I have come to him many times, but he does not seem to receive me; I suppose it is because I am so sinful."

"That is the very reason," replied Philip, "why he will receive you. It is these lost sinners, he tells us, that he came both to seek and to save. Does not God promise that 'though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool'? God cannot break his promise, we know. But he will not accept us and our sins too. If we cling to them, we cannot lay hold of Christ. It is only when our hands are emptied of all else that Christ will consent to fill them. If we are ashamed of Jesus, he will be ashamed of us."

"I fear," said Mrs. Emory, "that that is my case. I am not willing to confess Christ; I shrink from bearing my cross."

"Christ was not ashamed," replied Philip, meekly, "to bear the cross for us before thousands of insulting foes, and at last to die upon it. He was not ashamed to take upon him our sin and our punishment, in order that he might raise us to be sharers of his glory and of his crown. Is it any wonder that he does not allow us to be ashamed of him?"

"No, no!" replied Mrs. Emory, wiping away her tears; "I have been ashamed of Christ; I have been unwilling to confess Christ; yet I have been expecting him to receive me and give me peace and rest. I see it all. Pray for me that I may be willing not only to own his name before men, but, if it be his will, endure persecution for his sake."

Philip knelt in prayer, and again the voice of supplication was heard in that room where a few months before it was heard for the first time beside the couch of little Ada. Then it was to thank God that the child was saved from temporal death; now it was to plead that the mother might be saved from death everlasting.

When they arose from their knees there were tears upon each face. Ada had wept in sympathy with her mother's tears; now she clung to her mother's hand in awed surprise at seeing tears upon the face of Philip.

"I trust, madam," he said, at parting, "you will soon know not only the preciousness of Christ as your own Redeemer, but also the blessedness of being permitted to bear his cross.

"And the blessed Saviour loves you too," he added, turning to Ada; "will you not ask him to come and dwell in your heart, and make it clean and pure, so that you may both love him and be like him?"

Ada's heart was full. She was awed by the solemnity of the conversation she had heard, and though not comprehending it all, yet her young heart was full of strange emotion. She did not reply to Philip, but as soon as he was gone she stole quietly to her own room and Mrs. Emory returned to hers. As she passed near the door of an adjoining room she heard Margaret singing in a low tone.

"Will you come, Margaret," she said, opening the door a little, "and sing those lines for

me? I have caught a few words, and would like very much to hear it all."

"I am no singer," said Margaret, looking up with surprise; "I was only humming for my own pleasure."

"Never mind that," said Mrs. Emory; "it is the words I want; and if you do not like to sing them, you may repeat them for me." Margaret obeyed, and seating herself by a window, in a low voice repeated the following hymn:

"THE CROSS.

"Cross of my Saviour! in grandeur sublime
Standing serene! In the fullness of time
Midway upreared 'twixt the old and the new,
Centre of all that is holy and true!—
Centre divine, from which heavenly rays
Backward are sent to earth's earliest days,
And forward far down thro' the dimness and gloom,
On to the promised millennial bloom!

"Cross of my Saviour! upon thy dear head
Heaven's intensified glories are shed,
While, in the blackness of night, at thy feet,
Malice and hatred concentrated meet,
Heaven and hell meet in dreadful array.
How the sun pales in the zenith of day!
How the earth shudders in agony dread!
How the rocks rend as those blood-drops are shed!

Death met in desperate conflict with Life !
Tell me, my soul, why this terrible strife ?

* * * *

“ Cross of my Saviour ! the conflict is done ;
Jesus the blest has the victory won.
Ah ! thou art stained with the holiest tide,
Drawn from the veins of the Lamb crucified.
Victim, yet Victor ! thou slain, yet restored,
Buried, yet risen ! immaculate Lord !
Welcome are suffering, sorrow, and loss,
May I but cling to thy hallowed cross.”

Mrs. Emory listened with bowed head and drooping eyelids, and when the hymn was ended, exclaimed :

“ Oh, Margaret, I, too, must cling to the cross. I have been ashamed of it, but by God's grace I will be so no more. I see now just where I have stumbled. I see why God has not given me the rest I sought. Pray for me that I may honor and obey my Saviour, and never again be ashamed either of him or his cross.”

She left the room as she ceased speaking, and Margaret fell upon her knees in prayer.

Mrs. Emory retired to her closet. She laid the open Bible before her, and kneeling by it, prayed long and earnestly for strength to own

Christ before her husband, for grace to bear his cross fearlessly, for patience to endure every trial that awaited her, and for constancy of spirit, that she might never be ashamed of his service. When she rose she felt strengthened, and she resolved that before she slept she would open her heart to her husband and tell him all her conflict and her resolution.

"I am sure," she thought, "he will never be angry with me—nay, I think he will be pleased. Who knows but he will join me? and then how happy we shall be!" and with a face radiant with this glad hope, she hastened to join her husband at tea.

Mr. Emory sat down with a clouded brow. He had been harassed and perplexed all day, and he felt irritable and unhappy. Mrs. Emory noticed the cloud, and sought in vain to dispel it; he remained silent and moody, and as soon as the meal was over rose to leave.

"Will you be home early, George?" inquired his wife, following him to the door.

"No," he replied; "it will be late;" and without waiting for farther explanation or question, he hurried away.

The clock had just struck eleven when Mr.

Emory entered his own house. He was home earlier than he had expected, but the cloud yet rested upon his brow, and as his wife met him in the hall he did not welcome her with his usual kindness of manner, but hurried past her into the library. It was a cool evening, and the cheerful fire that sparkled in the grate gave out a ruddy glow in the room, and as she drew his chair near it seemed to give him welcome.

"You look tired, George," said Mrs. Emory, taking a seat near him.

"Yes, I am tired," he answered; "I wish you had not stayed up for me, Julia."

"I wished to speak to you a little while," said Mrs. Emory, rising, "but if you wish to be alone, I will try and find another time;" and taking a lamp from the table, she was leaving the room, when her husband recalled her.

"Stay, Julia," he said; "I can listen to you now as well as at another time. Sit down," he added, as with increasing kindness of manner he drew a chair near the fire, "and tell me what you have to talk about."

Mrs. Emory replaced the lamp on the table and took the chair her husband had placed for her.



Ada Emory.

"I know, George," she said, with much embarrassment, "you will be surprised at what I am about to tell you, but I trust you will not be displeased. Do you remember the old Bible you threw away last summer, which Ada picked up under the table and was so desirous to read?"

"Yes," said Mr. Emory, starting; "but what of it, Julia?"

"Here it is," said his wife, drawing the book from her pocket, "and I think I have found in it the way of life. I am seeking the Saviour it tells me about, and oh, George, will you not seek him with me?"

Mr. Emory turned pale. "Give me that book," he exclaimed, sternly, and without waiting for her to obey, he snatched the book from her hand and flung it into the fire.

Mrs. Emory sprang forward, and before her husband could well prevent her caught the book from the flames, brushed the embers from the soiled leaves, and replaced it in her pocket.



CHAPTER VII.

MRS. EMORY'S CONFESSION OF CHRIST.



MR. EMORY resumed his seat in silence. The promptness of his wife's movement surprised him and helped to restore his self-possession. Mrs. Emory felt too much shocked and disappointed to speak, and for a few moments both remained silent.

"Julia," said the husband, at length, "how is this? I do not understand it at all. I thought you a woman of good sense, but what you have told me to-night surprises me so much that I half suspect you are beside yourself."

"No, George," replied Mrs. Emory, "I am not beside myself. For many months I have been seeking my Saviour and praying that he would reveal himself to me, but all the time I have been ashamed to have you know it.

"At length, however, these words of Christ,

‘Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels,’ revealed my true state to me, and I could not rest until I had confessed him before you. George, I am resolved to follow my Saviour!’

Mr. Emory rose from his seat and walked the room. Since his childhood he had not been so moved. That old Bible which had lain for months under the pillow of a suffering sister, from which she had daily drawn consolation for a dying hour, and which, with hands stiffening in death, she had given to him, had sprung up again to torment him, and the words, “Read it, George!”—her last words—rang once more in his ears like a funeral bell. Yet that book, that despised and cast-off book, had become a sacred treasure to his wife. For its sake she had just risked his severe displeasure, and, taught by it, she had just avowed her determination to follow Christ.

How wide, at that moment, to the proud man of the world, seemed the gulf of separation that had suddenly opened betwixt him and his wife! He felt that he dearly loved her, that to be sepa-

rated from her even in feeling was more than he could endure, yet to go with her was farthest from his thought. To bring her back to him now became his desperate resolution.

Little he understood at that moment the weakness of his own arm—little did he know how powerless was his hand to draw back into the snares of earth one of those concerning whom Jesus said, “No man shall pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

“Julia,” said Mr. Emory at length, with forced calmness, “tell me just how all this has come about. What first led you into this way of thinking?” and seating himself, he listened while his wife went back to the day when Ada first placed the old Bible in her hands, and carefully traced all the processes of thought and feeling that had led to her present resolution.

“Well, Julia,” said Mr. Emory, when she had ceased speaking, “I have listened to you very attentively, and I must say all this seems to me unworthy of you. It begins with the idle chatter of a little girl who came to you with her nursery tales all glowing in her childish imagination, and it ends in the solemn cant of an old basket-weaver. Your teachers have

been Ada, Ada's nurse, and this old man, whom nobody knows or cares to know. Dignified teachers indeed!"

"George," said Mrs. Emory, "of this I am satisfied—that it is by God's Spirit I have been enlightened, and it would ill become me to despise those by whom he has condescended to teach me. If he has chosen to use these humble instruments by which to show me my danger and lead me to my Saviour, I ought to thank him none the less."

"And my wife intends to seek companionship with this class of persons, does she?" inquired Mr. Emory with a sneer.

"I have not said that," replied Mrs. Emory, "yet I cannot love Christ without loving his people—I cannot honor Christ without honoring his faithful servants."

"Very well," said Mr. Emory, "but if you honor this psalm-singing nurse of yours, it must hereafter be at a distance, for this is the last night she remains under my roof."

"But, George," said Mrs. Emory, "Margaret is not—"

"Never mind, if you please, what she is or is not," interposed Mr. Emory. "She goes at day-

light to-morrow, so we will waste no words on her. As for this old saint in the cottage, I hardly know what I can do with him, as he owns the hut he lives in, but I shall surely do what I can to make his stay there uncomfortable.

"And for yourself, Julia," he added, "I shall hope, when this amiable adviser of yours upstairs is removed, that you will be able to return to your sober senses. In the mean time, you will oblige me by never again returning to this subject. If you are resolved to keep that old book which you have to-night rescued from the fire, keep it out of my sight, or it will not be so easily saved next time."

With these words Mr. Emory took the lamp and retired, leaving his wife sitting alone by the fire.

As the sound of his footsteps died away upon the stair Mrs. Emory knelt to pray. She knelt to weep before God, and to beseech him to soften her husband's heart, but strangely, as it seemed to her, she had no tears to shed. A peace of which she had previously no conception seemed to brood over and enfold her. A sense of love, sweet and all pervading, filled her heart full, and her words, instead of sorrowful suppli-

cation, were those of thanksgiving and joy. There was no fear, no dread, no apprehension. Christ seemed so intimately present that she almost felt herself leaning upon his bosom and listening to his word. The sweet promises which a little before had only filled her with sorrow, because unable to rest upon them, now flowed into her heart, a stream of holy consolation, and when she rose from her knees it was to wonder at the strange calmness and peace that had so suddenly come to her. She had just acknowledged Christ, not so much from conscious love to him as from a sincere desire to do what he required of her, but now she felt that love to him would prompt her to own him before the whole world.

"I will go and see Margaret and tell her of all this," she said, after sitting a while in the soft light of the expiring fire.

She ascended the stairs with a noiseless tread. The moon was at its full, and as its light streamed through the open shutters it seemed to fill the house with unwonted glory. She paused in Ada's room for a moment, and as she bent over her sleeping child a new tenderness seemed to warm and fill her heart. How calm and tran-

quilized were all things ! Even the still folds of the white curtain looked softer and more transparent than ever before, and the stars beamed upon her as she gazed out for a moment upon the night, seeming, in their solemn beauty, to speak to her of God. Margaret was awake, and as Mrs. Emory entered the room sprang up in alarm to inquire if anything was wrong.

“Hush, Margaret !” said Mrs. Emory, softly ; “nothing is wrong, but I am so happy I could not help coming to tell you. I seem in a new world, where everything is full of gladness. Tell me, Margaret, do you think this is the peace I have been seeking ?”

Margaret did not attempt to answer. She rose from her bed and dressed herself in haste, while Mrs. Emory withdrew to Ada’s room to be alone in prayer. She knelt by the bedside of her child, took the soft, warm hand of the little sleeper in her own, and for the first time in her life became conscious of unutterable longings for the salvation of her child. She bowed her head in prayer for Ada, but her thoughts passed swiftly on to her husband, her relatives and acquaintances, until they enfolded the whole world in their eager embrace.

How long she remained upon her knees she knew not, but when she rose it was to find Margaret standing in silent, tearful joy at her side, and then the two sat down together in the soft moonlight to talk of the wondrous change, and to magnify the condescending love of God to sinners. And there they talked, no longer as mistress and servant, for social distinctions were all swept away and forgotten, but as sisters in Christ, united to each other because each united to him, rejoicing with the same joy, and animated by the same hopes and expectations. In this manner the time glided very pleasantly on. How long they talked they neither knew nor cared, until a heavy step startled them and put an abrupt end to their conversation.

"My husband is calling me," exclaimed Mrs. Emory, springing forward, closely followed by Margaret. "I am here, George," she answered, advancing quickly; "I will be with you in a moment."

"Why are you up till this unseasonable hour, Julia?" said Mr. Emory, emerging from a dark recess in which he had been standing, "and who is this with you?"

"It is only Margaret, George," replied the

wife; "we were talking so pleasantly that neither of us thought how late it was."

"Go to your room, woman!" exclaimed Mr. Emory, turning angrily toward Margaret, "and as soon as it is light be ready to leave my house. Do you understand?"

"I understand you, sir," said Margaret, "but—"

"Not a word!" interposed Mr. Emory. "You leave at daylight, so make good your preparations;" then turning abruptly away from Margaret, he led his wife away.

"Julia," he said, sternly, as soon as they were alone, "I suspected you of being out of your senses, but now I am sure of it. Here I find you at this hour of the morning closeted with one of your servants instead of being quietly sleeping in your own bed. Where is all this to end?"

"George," said Mrs. Emory, bursting into tears at the unwonted harshness of her husband, "I was so happy, feeling that Christ had forgiven and accepted me, that I wanted to tell some one who had had the same experience. So I went to Margaret, for I thought she could tell me if it was really Christ filling my heart

with his presence and his love that made me so glad, and we have been talking ever since of the great love of God to us."

"Cant and nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Emory, white with passion and excitement. "Did I not tell you before not to disturb me again with this talk? and here you are still pouring it into my ears. Let this be the last of it, the very last!"

"Oh, George!" cried the wife, rising and throwing her arms around her husband's neck, "let me speak to you of Jesus."

"Julia," said Mr. Emory, taking both his wife's hands in his and holding her at arm's length from him, "I am very angry; do not provoke me any farther lest I should say or do what I may for ever regret. You have heard what I said—speak no more to me of the Bible, of religion, or of Christ. I shall not listen to it, and you only enrage me by persisting."

Mrs. Emory withdrew in silence to a chair, and seating herself, covered her face with her hands. For a little while there was no sound in the room save the hard, excited breathing of the husband and the low sobs of the wife.

"Give me that Bible, Julia," said Mr. Emory, at length. Mrs. Emory handed it to him in silence.

"Now," he continued, taking the book from her hand, "you must go to bed: you need rest;" and drawing her arm within his own, he walked with her to her room.

A terrible struggle was going on in his breast, but he did not speak. For the first time in his life, he had been unkind to his wife and spoken harsh and bitter words to her, but he had no wish to recall them. He could have fallen down at her feet and asked forgiveness for the pain he had given her, but that would never do. It would seem like relenting toward her religion, which he hated. No, he must not yield; he must crush out this hateful fanaticism, and then they would be happy again together. Opening the door gently, he said in a low tone: "Now go to bed, Julia, and get some rest. I will go down to the library for an hour." Then, without trusting himself to say more, he hastened down stairs.

He shut the door carefully behind him, as if hoping thus to shut out unpleasant thoughts, and then flung himself into a chair. The lamp

Mrs. Emory had left several hours before was burning low and shedding a sickly light over the room; the fire had died out on the hearth, and everything seemed dreary and comfortless. Mr. Emory looked round the room, and the thoughts which had robbed him of rest and driven him from his bed to seek his wife returned to him with increased bitterness.

"It is this Bible"—he was still holding it in his hand—"that has done all this mischief!" he exclaimed. "If I had only destroyed it when I came across it that day, I might have been saved all this. But I will destroy it now; it shall do no more harm!" and suiting the action to the word, he began raking open the ashes in search of fire sufficient to burn it, but the ashes were cold, for the fire was long since out.

"What is the use of being a fool!" he exclaimed, at length. "If I should destroy this Bible, of what earthly use could it be? Is not the world full of them? and whoever likes can read them. Why should I be so eager to destroy this one, the last treasure of my poor dead sister?" and turning to an empty drawer under one of the bookcases, he placed the book

within, locked it, and opening a window, deliberately threw the key away.

"There!" he muttered, half ashamed of his folly; "find it who can!" and closing the sash, he walked back and forth through the room, buried in anxious and remorseful thought. When he looked up the faint dawn was just beginning to pale the eastern sky. He remembered that he had ordered Margaret to be ready to leave at dawn, and hastening to John's room, roused him up from sleep.

"John," he said as soon as the man could understand him, "in half an hour I want you to have the horses at the door, to drive Nurse Allen back to S——. She goes home this morning,"

"So early as that?" grumbled John, rubbing his eyes and glancing at the window.

"So early as that," repeated Mr. Emory, turning away; "there is no time to lose;" and leaving the half-awakened man amazed and angry at this unexpected summons, he returned to the library.

As the sound of wheels was heard at the door, Margaret, who was in readiness, descended the stairs.

"Are you ready for me, John?" she asked, looking out at the door.

"Yes; but what on earth are you going at this time of night for?" answered John.

"It is best I should go now," replied Margaret, in a pleasant voice, for she saw he was out of temper; "but I shall have to trouble you to bring down my luggage: it is all in the passage up stairs."

"Mrs. Allen," said Mr. Emory, who had come forward unobserved, "I wish to speak with you in the library." Margaret followed.

"Here are your wages, and a good deal more," he said, handing her a small parcel. "I have not forgotten why you left our house almost a year ago, and I certainly did not expect, when we recalled you, that you would resume the course of conduct which at that time was so offensive to both Mrs. Emory and myself. You came back to us in a time of trouble, and I am not ungrateful for the vigilance and care with which you watched over our child. But when you assumed the position of a religious teacher in my family you quite forgot your place and what you were employed to do. Your services can hence-

forth be dispensed with, and I shall not expect ever again to see you in my house."

Margaret had opened her lips to reply, but Mr. Emory was gone. With tears in her eyes, she ran hastily up to Ada's room and pressed a parting kiss upon the lips of the sleeping child. How she longed to say one parting word to Mrs. Emory, whom she felt she never so truly loved before! But this, had she dared, there was no time to do, for the voice of John, who was now waiting, called her, and hastening down, she soon found herself again borne rapidly toward S—.

On leaving the library, Mr. Emory had hurried to his own room. He entered it very softly, and approached the bed upon which his wife had cast herself down without undressing. Wearied and grieved, she had fallen into a heavy slumber, and as Mr. Emory bent over her the traces of tears were yet visible upon her face. She was very pale, and he thought, as he looked at her, he had never seen her so beautiful, but the expression of her countenance was one of such profound peace that he turned away quickly, as though it was too sacred for him to look upon.

He walked to a window, and drawing aside the curtain, gazed out. The world seemed very peaceful and calm as he looked around and traced the faint outline of the distant hills, dimly relieved against the pale horizon. The sound of wheels aroused him from his reverie. It was his own carriage, bearing away the tried and devoted servant whom he had just dismissed for no offence whatever save the faithful endeavor to do good in his family.

A feeling of pain came to his heart, for during all the years that Margaret had spent in his house this had been her only offence, if offence it could be called. Patiently and untiringly she had tended his sick wife and ministered to his dying children. Very tenderly she had reared the one little one that had been spared him, and now she had been coldly sent away without even the privilege of saying farewell to the mistress she had loved and served so long, and with not one word of self-defence allowed her.

Mr. Emory, though passionate and proud, was generous and grateful when his better nature was allowed to assert itself, and for a moment he was painfully disturbed. Even

Margaret's offence, which an hour before had seemed so grievous, began to lose somewhat of its aggravated character, and he was beginning to reproach himself with needless severity. Angry with himself for this relenting, he turned away, only to meet a keener reproach in the pale, calm face of his sleeping wife. He felt humbled and ashamed in the presence of that placid countenance, and he half wished she would waken and reproach him, that he might have some excuse for being again angry.

So the mute tormentors within harassed and reproached him, until, sullen and unhappy, he flung himself into a chair and took up a book. But it was yet too early to read easily. "I will lie down awhile," he said, tossing the book from him, and stretching himself upon a low couch at the farther end of the room, he soon fell asleep.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE PURCHASED BIBLES.

MRS. EMORY was awakened from sleep by the touch of her little girl's hand upon her own. She started up, and for a moment felt confused and uncertain, but soon all the events of the past night came back to her mind. She arose quickly, and taking Ada's hand in hers, led her back to the nursery.

"Where is Margaret, mamma?" said Ada as soon as they were alone, for her mother had motioned her to be silent.

"Is she not in her room?" inquired Mrs. Emory, with a start, for she had hoped the order of the past night would be recalled.

"No, mamma, I can't find her anywhere; all her things are taken away, and I think she has gone too."

Mrs. Emory rose and looked into the room;

it was silent and abandoned. She sat down on the well-arranged bed, and, overcome by grief and disappointment, burst into tears. She felt that to be left alone, without one Christian friend or adviser, was more than she could bear, but in a moment she remembered that Jesus remained, and that no one could deprive her of his presence and love.

“Poor Margaret!” thought Mrs. Emory, forgetting for a moment her own sorrow; “she has been sent away for no fault whatever, but, thank God! she too will have the consolation of his presence and his love.”

“Don’t cry, mamma,” said Ada, who had been bravely holding in check her own tears since she saw her mother’s grief—“don’t cry, mamma; Margaret will come back if you send for her.”

Mrs. Emory drew her child to her, and sweeping back the hair from the fair, smooth forehead, looked down into her face with unutterable tenderness. Love for her children had always been the strongest passion of her nature; now, it had in it a new element, of which she formerly had had no conception. Christ’s love had been infused into that fountain of mother-love that ever

welled up so richly in her heart, and had given it an entirely new character.

"My darling," she said, "Margaret will not come back any more, but you must not ask why. It is best you should not know. We must learn to do without her in future, and now I expect my little girl to learn to wait on herself. You know you and Susan did not get on nicely before, and I think you are grown a big enough girl now to do without any one. Will you try?"

"Oh yes, mamma!" exclaimed Ada, straightening up to her full height. "I can do everything for myself so well, and Susan—"

"That will do," said Mrs. Emory, cutting short the rising complaint. "Susan is very well if you do not fret her. Try to be very kind to her, and then she will be kind to you. Always keep out of her way, and do not tumble up things after she has arranged them, and when you see anything you can do to help her, run and do it without waiting to be asked. Will you, Ada?"

"I will try, mamma," said Ada, hesitating, "but—"

"You need not finish that *but*, Ada," said Mrs.

Emory, gently ; “I know just what it means. You dislike Susan, and I think she dislikes you too. But never mind. If you try to be good to her, you will gradually overcome your dislike of her, and she will come to love you in return. And now, Ada, I have something else to speak to you about. You remember almost a year ago, when you received that dreadful fall?”

“Oh yes, mamma!” said Ada, with a shudder ; “I shall never forget that, I think.”

“Well, do you remember a little before, just after Margaret went away, that you asked me to hear you say your prayer one evening, and I did not hear it?”

“Yes, mamma, I remember,” replied Ada, watching her mother’s countenance with increasing interest.

“At that time, Ada,” continued Mrs. Emory, in a softer tone, “I did not love God or his holy word. I did not know how very sinful my heart was, or how much need I had that God should give me a new heart to love and obey him. But while you were so dreadfully ill, Ada, God showed me how sinful I was, and caused me to think a great deal about what the Bible says concerning the Lord Jesus and his coming into the

world to suffer and die in order that poor sinners might be saved.

"But, after all, I did not learn to love the blessed Saviour. I think I did not really in my heart believe he would save me, though I should come and cast myself entirely upon him. And so I went on very sad and sorrowful, for I knew God had not forgiven my sins, and I knew, too, that if he did not forgive me I could not go to the blessed heaven where Christ is, but must be sent away from him into a place of perpetual sorrow and misery. But last night God made me feel that he had forgiven my sins. He made me very, very glad, and now I want to serve him and pray to him all my life."

"Oh, mamma," cried Ada, unable longer to control her joy, "I am so glad! And now you will talk to me as Margaret used to, and tell me the meaning of the hard things I read in the Bible, won't you, mamma?"

The Bible! Mrs. Emory started. She had no Bible perhaps; but it was not so much that, for she knew another could easily be procured. Yet what if her husband had destroyed it? What if he had indeed committed this great sin against God?

"Let us pray now," she said, and for the first time kneeling alone with her child, she unburdened her heart to God.

When they arose there were tears on Ada's face, and putting her arms around her mother's neck, she whispered: "Mamma, I don't think I love the Saviour, but I want to. How shall I get a new heart too?"

"By just going and giving yourself all and entirely to Jesus, Ada. He will take away your sinful heart, and give you a new heart that will love and obey him."

"What is a new heart, mamma?" inquired Ada, anxiously; "I don't think I quite understand."

"It is, I think," replied Mrs. Emory, slowly, for she keenly felt her own ignorance of spiritual things, "a new temper, and a new will, and a new disposition altogether. Our old heart is passionate and proud and stubborn. It will not obey God, and cannot be made to love him. So God's Spirit takes away all this wicked disposition, and puts within us a will and temper and disposition quite different—just like Christ's, Ada. Do you think you understand?"

"I think so, mamma;" yet there was a hesitancy, as though it were not quite clear.

The sound of the breakfast-bell interrupted their conversation. Mrs. Emory left Ada to complete her preparations alone, and hastened to see if her husband was awake. He was, however, still sleeping. Wearied out with excitement and toil, he had fallen into a heavy slumber, from which it was difficult to arouse him.

Mrs. Emory knelt beside the couch, and for a moment the fear of his returning anger made her hesitate to speak to him. "Oh, what can I do," she asked herself, "to calm his spirit and soften his displeasure?" "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not," said the voice within. She started, and looked round, for the words came to her with such well-timed fitness that it almost seemed to her they must have been uttered from without rather than suggested from within. "Yes, I do lack wisdom," she exclaimed mentally, and clasping her hands, she sent up to God a silent prayer for wisdom to direct her amid the difficulties that beset her way.

“George,” she said, gently, when the prayer was done. Mr. Emory started at the sound of her voice and looked up.

“Is it you, Julia?” he exclaimed, with a confused recollection of the events of the past night. “I have slept very late, I think,” he added, looking at his watch, and then hurriedly prepared for breakfast.

Breakfast was not a pleasant meal for Mr. Emory that morning. As he thought over the events of the preceding night he felt more and more dissatisfied with himself, while the subdued cheerfulness and gentle manner of his wife, so far from reassuring him, only increased his discomfort. He tried to find circumstances sufficiently aggravated to justify his harshness toward his wife and Margaret, but after all his search they were still wanting. As soon as breakfast was over he hurried away, but instead of going directly to his place of business, he bent his steps toward the cottage of the basket-maker.

Philip, who had not yet commenced work, was sitting at a little table with an open Bible before him, from which he had been reading. He had just finished his morning lesson, and at the

moment Mr. Emory rapped was engaged in selecting and copying on small slips of paper some passages of Scripture. This he usually did every morning, and to each person that called on him during the day he gave one. Some only laughed at "the pious Dutchman," as they called him, some tossed his slips into the streets, to be picked up and read by others, and a few laid them away to be carefully meditated upon. To some they proved "a savor of life;" to some who read and scorned them they proved "a savor of death." He did not select what he fancied might be suited to particular individuals; but having asked God to send them to those to whom they were specially adapted, drew them forth at a venture, and gave them out with the silent prayer that they might be blessed by the Holy Spirit in reaching and influencing the hearts of those who received them.

A quick rap roused him from his employment, and opening the door, he confronted Mr. Emory.

"I think," said the visitor, without waiting for the usual compliments of the morning, "you are the man who makes these baskets?"

"I am, sir," said Philip, bowing with habitual politeness.

"And basket-making is your occupation, is it?"

"It is, sir," replied the old man, with a slight tinge of haughtiness in his tones.

"But you have of late undertaken the work of a religious teacher, I believe?" said Mr. Emory, sarcastically.

Philip reddened, but he answered very calmly, "I have always, since God opened my eyes to see the truth as it is in Jesus, made it my business to tell impenitent men they were lost sinners and needed salvation."

"How long is it since you began to go from house to house instructing women and children to the same effect?" inquired Mr. Emory, with increasing contempt of both tone and manner. "In other words, how long is it since you did me the honor to visit my house on this important mission?"

"I was in your house very lately, sir," replied the old man, now fully comprehending the meaning of his visitor's questions, "but I was sent for, and went not knowing what was wanted of me."

"And when there," said Mr. Emory, interrupting him, "you expounded the Scriptures and sought to make yourself particularly useful?"

"And when there," continued the old man, without appearing to notice Mr. Emory's sneer, "I answered such questions as were asked me, and expressed such opinions as seemed to me suited to the case of those with whom I was speaking. Will you have the goodness to show me what was wrong in what I said?"

"I am not here to point out the wrong or right of things," said Mr. Emory, with ill-suppressed passion, "but to inform you that your visits are not to be repeated."

"Certainly not, sir, if such is your wish. You have now asked me several questions; may I, in return, ask you one or two?"

"You can ask me what you please, since you make it a matter of courtesy."

"You are a merchant, are you not, sir?"

"I am."

"And you doubtless have a good deal of treasure on earth: allow me to ask, have you any treasure in heaven?"

"I gave you no permission to ask me ques-

tions of this nature. On earth or in heaven my treasure is no concern of yours."

"I think you gave me permission to ask you any question I pleased. But I did not ask in order to pain or displease you, or even to elicit an answer, but to lead you to reflection. You need to reflect, sir, upon your true position, for it is one of peril."

"Be kind enough to endeavor to lead those who need your leading! Your question is an impertinence which I did not expect, even from you!" and turning angrily from his questioner, Mr. Emory was hurrying away, when Philip politely stepped forward and opened the little gate.

"Will you have the goodness to accept this?" he said as his visitor passed out, and before there was time to reflect, he thrust a paper into his hand.

Had Mr. Emory been allowed an instant for reflection, he would have rejected the paper with scorn, but the whole matter had been managed so skillfully that he had not only taken the paper, but allowed the man to re-enter his house and close the door before he was fully aware what he had done. But it was too late to

undo the act. The paper was open in his hand, and he was reading: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Mr. Emory read the passage through, and then, as if held by some irresistible fascination, went back and read it again.

"Fool that I am!" he exclaimed aloud, tearing the paper in shreds; "idiot indeed! Here I've thought quite to overawe and frighten this old man, and, lo! he has proved himself more than a match for me in every particular! I have been passionate; he, cool; I have been purposely insulting; he, calm and gentlemanly; I put myself in a position to be questioned by him, and get a question I never dreamt of for my pains. Finally I go away carrying in my hand that precious passage from his old Bible, while he sits within and glories in his success!"

Mr. Emory had taken an unusual road to his place of business, and as he hurried on he found himself passing a large low building that was

used on that particular day of the week for a morning prayer-meeting. The leader was reading the third chapter of John, and as Mr. Emory passed he heard: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

"Strange!" he muttered, hurrying on and endeavoring to laugh at this recurrence of the words he had just read, but it was not until he was again absorbed in business that he could shake off unwelcome thoughts or forget that terrible "is condemned already," which seemed ever ringing in his ears.

As soon as her husband was gone, Mrs. Emory went to the library and sought, but in vain, for the old Bible.

"He has destroyed it, I fear," she said, at length, after a wearisome search; then drawing a chair to a window, she sat down, and for a long time reflected upon her future course. At length her brow cleared; her difficulties seemed slowly to disappear, and rising, she went calmly about the duties of the morning.

"George," said Mrs. Emory as they were sit-

ting alone at dinner, "I have a request to make of you which I hope you will not refuse."

Mr. Emory looked keenly at her for a moment, and then said coldly, "Well, Julia?"

"Do not be angry with me, George. You suspect it has some connection with our sad trouble of last night: so it has, but I hope you will allow me to speak."

Mrs. Emory's tones were gentle and full of sadness, and her husband shrank from grieving her further by angry opposition.

"What is it, Julia?" he said, in a tone that was meant to be kind; "I shall try and not be unreasonable." Mrs. Emory looked up quickly. She had not expected so much kindness, and the tears sprang to her eyes as she said:

"I very much desire to purchase some Bibles to give to the different members of our family, but I cannot do so without your permission. I want to put them in possession of the same blessing that has been bestowed upon me."

Mr. Emory rose and walked the room without making any reply. The gentle and submissive spirit of his wife quite disarmed him. He wished she had gone and purchased the books, so that he could have had a reasonable

excuse for being angry, but how could he resist a petition, and such a one? He felt that his wife's manner was changed. Though always gentle toward him, there was something in it now which quite put his chafed and angry spirit to shame, and it vexed him that it should be so; for, resist it as he would, it forced upon him the conviction of a change in her of which he would gladly be ignorant.

And this request—how should he grant it but by a tacit abandonment of the position he had only the night before taken? His pride revolted against the apparent weakness of such a course, yet how should he refuse that gentle and wifely request?—so womanly and so Christian too. Mr. Emory blushed as that word Christian stole unbidden into his thought, and he frowned it away.

A sharp, suppressed cry from his wife caused him to turn quickly. "What is the matter, Julia?" he exclaimed, springing forward and catching her in his arms. Her right hand was clasped tightly over her temples, and her left was pressed upon her heart, while her eyes were dilated and her face crimson.

"What is the matter, my wife?" he repeated,

deeply moved, taking her in his arms and laying her gently upon a sofa.

"Don't mind, George," she said, calmly, as soon as the pain had subsided a little; "these spasms are becoming rather frequent of late, but they are soon over. There! I am well now!" she added; "and now what of my request?"

"Yes, I remember," said Mr. Emory, greatly relieved at seeing his wife better. "You can please yourself in the matter, Julia."

"Thank you, George; I am so glad!"

But Mr. Emory was not glad, and his wife's joy only disconcerted him the more.

"Are you sure you are better, Julia?" he asked, abruptly, taking no notice of her thanks.

"Yes, George, I am quite well, thank you."

"Then I must go;" and snatching up his hat, he hastily left the house.

During the afternoon Mrs. Emory went out and made her purchases, and before evening every member of her household was put in possession of the word of God.

"I dare not offer my husband one," thought she, "but I will put this beautiful family Bible

in the library ; perhaps he may some time, when all alone, discover and read it."

So in a quiet nook of the library a Bible took its position, while a silent prayer went up to God that ere long her husband might be brought to love and honor it as she did.

Mrs. Emory had assembled all her servants in the dining-room while she distributed their Bibles among them. Some looked surprised, some grateful, and all pleased, except one. It was Susan. She took the book with evident reluctance, and as Mrs. Emory turned away tossed it down with a gesture of contempt.

"Thank you," said John as he took the Bible; "I used to study this book in the Sunday-school before I was as big as Miss Ada."

"And I trust you will read it again, John, and not you only, but all the rest, for it is truly the word of God."

"Here is your book, Ada," said her mother, when the two were left alone. "Take it, my child, and read it daily, and ask God's help that you may understand and love his holy book."



CHAPTER IX.

MRS. EMORY'S LETTER.

IT was with very different feelings from those of the previous year that Margaret left Mr. Emory's house. Then she deliberately chose her own course, feeling that God approved it, and would make her going a means of greater good than her stay. When she was recalled, and the restraint upon her intercourse with Ada removed, she felt that this too was of God, and that his hand was in all events that had transpired.

But now the case was different. So far from leaving of her own choice, she had been dismissed with coldness and severity, and no word of self-defence allowed her. Her first feeling had been one of resentment, but she was very soon able to rise above resentful feelings and reflect calmly upon the course she had been pursuing.

"I cannot see where I have done wrong," she reflected as she busied herself through the still morning hours with her preparations; "I cannot see how a Christian could have pursued a course materially different from mine. It is very hard to go, now that my stay might be so pleasant to myself and perhaps profitable to Ada and others."

"God has no need of you, Margaret," a voice within seemed to say. "He can accomplish his work, if it please him to do so, without you. If you have been permitted to do anything for him here, yours has been a very high honor, and who shall say that he honors you less in sending you away? Count yourself happy if it is given you, 'in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.'"

Margaret knelt in prayer, and arose strengthened, and it was not until she left the library to give her good-bye kiss to Ada that her tears found way.

"What do you go away for if you feel so bad about it?" inquired John, ill-naturedly, as he turned his horses into the high road to S——. "I suppose you could have stayed if you'd liked."

Margaret did not answer, but dried her tears quickly, and was soon able to engage the man in pleasant conversation. In a kindly way she drew from him much of his past history—the story of his boyhood and of his good Christian mother, long since dead, the Sunday-school where he was taught the Scriptures, and of subsequent years of carelessness and sin.

“There, now!” said John as they drew near S——; “I have never told anybody before so much about myself, or talked so much on religion as I have with you to-day.”

“And do not let this be the last of it, John; think of these things, and set yourself earnestly to seek the Saviour.”

“I’ve heard about seeking the Saviour,” said John, averting his face a little as he spoke, “but I don’t know how it’s done. It’s pretty hard for a young fellow to keep good resolutions when there’s so much to draw him off from the right way.”

“I know, John, it is pretty hard to resist temptation, but if you really feel too weak to do it yourself, and go and ask God from the heart to help you, he will.”

“Do you really believe that?” said John, look-

ing round quickly, and Margaret noticed, as he did so, that his eyes were moist.

"I do indeed believe it, John, and what is more, I know it."

"Well, I don't know. I used to think so too, when I was at the Sunday-school, for I believed everything they told me there, but when I tried it I don't think I got much help of that sort."

"Did you really and from the heart, John, feel that you could not do without the help you asked, and that nobody but God could give it to you?"

"Well, no, I don't think I did. I thought, of course, I could get on easier with it than I could without it, though."

"Well, John, when you come to feel that sin is ever so much stronger than you, that you cannot get rid of it yourself, do what you will, and that it will certainly stick to you and drive you down to hell if it is not taken away from you, then you will go and ask God in earnest to save you, and he will save you."

"But how will he do it? I'd like to know that."

"He'll just give you to see," said Margaret,

warming with her subject, "that the Lord Jesus Christ pities and loves you so much that he is not willing for you to perish, but will save you from your sin and danger if you will only let him—that is, if you will give up trying to save yourself, and cast yourself, all sinful and helpless as you are, into his hands."

"Yes, but the trouble is, maybe he won't be willing, after a fellow has been so awfully wicked, to have anything to do with him."

"Why, John, did he not bear our sins on the cross? Does he not tell us he gave his life to save us? Has he not sent his Spirit to show to people their need of him? And now do you think he will not take them when they come to him?"

"Well, I should think he would."

"He certainly will, because he has promised, and he never breaks any of his promises."

"Where do you want to go?" inquired John, abruptly, for by this time they were in S——.

"Set me down at my own door, if you please, John."

An hour later the man was on his way home, full of new, strange thoughts, and Margaret, her thoughts following him with prayerful earnest-

ness, was busy arranging her affairs. It was not very easy to get possession of her own house, which was rented, but by the aid of some kind friend another house was procured for her tenant. In a fortnight she was again established in her own home.

“Is there any letter for me?” inquired Margaret, one evening, at the village post-office, about a month after her return to S——.

“There is a package of some sort,” replied the man, “but it is big enough for a dozen letters.”

Margaret took the package and hurried away, for she saw it was from Beech Grove, and her heart was throbbing with anxiety to read it. As soon as she was at home she tore off the envelope, and opening her package, found a small bundle of religious tracts, some money, and a letter. She broke the seal with a trembling hand, and glancing at the bottom of the sheet, saw it was from Mrs. Emory.

“I did not expect it—oh, I’m so glad!” she exclaimed aloud, and drawing a chair to a window, through which the setting sun was pouring a flood of light, she read:

“DEAR MARGARET: Being alone this evening I have resolved to devote the time, which might otherwise seem heavy, to writing a letter to you.

“My husband left home this morning for Baltimore, Ada is asleep, and the quiet of the house seems almost oppressive, but I shall soon forget it when I begin to tell you about the various things that have transpired since you went away.

“You will not need me to tell you how very much I have missed you, and how often I have wished to see you, for you already know it well enough. The little talk we had that last night you were here gave me my first knowledge of what Christian fellowship is, and I have often thought since, if such communion is so sweet on earth, what must it be in heaven, where there is no sin or imperfection of any sort?

“Since you went away I have given a great deal of time to the study of the Bible, and have been trying to find something I could do for Christ. I began with my own family, to each of whom I gave a Bible, besides putting up one in the library, praying that it might be blessed to whoever should go there to read.

“John was the only one of the servants who seemed really glad to get a Bible. He, poor fellow! seemed greatly pleased, and he has begun to read it in earnest. Only yesterday I found him sitting under the verandah, reading, and Ada—would you believe it?—was explaining to him. When I saw it, I hastened away and asked God to give her wisdom, that she might not mislead him by her childish words.

“Last Sunday morning, as I was reading in the library, he came in, already dressed to go out, and told me he was going to church and intended joining the Sunday-school that day. I encouraged him to go, and when he returned he brought a volume of religious memoirs, which had been furnished him there.

“Poor Susan! ever since I gave her the Bible she has been ten times more irritable than before. The other day I attempted to speak to her about her soul, but she went into a furious passion, and almost terrified me with her violence. I cannot bear to send her away where no one will care for her soul, so I put up with her bad ways, hoping that by and by she will change for the better.

“Ada’s birth-day passed very quietly this

year. I took a walk with her to the grove, and just there where she fell knelt down with her and thanked God for his great mercy. Last year I did not know how to pray. I was altogether dead in trespasses and sins; now I feel that I am indeed alive from the dead. 'Old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new!'

"I felt such a desire to see the dear old man who taught me so clearly the way of life that at evening Ada and I walked down to his cottage. He seemed embarrassed and uncomfortable at first, but when I told him of the dear Saviour I had found he actually wept for joy. I could not persuade him to call at our house, and when I pressed him to come he seemed so distressed that I said no more about it.

"I send you this bundle of religious tracts, and you may give them away to any one who needs them. I must tell you in what an odd way I came to get them.

"One Sunday evening I saw a young man with tracts calling at several houses in our neighborhood, but when he came to ours he looked and hesitated, and I thought was coming in, but he seemed to change his mind, and was

passing on, when I went forward to the gate to speak to him.

“‘You were going to call,’ I said; ‘why did you not?’

“‘I was distributing tracts in your neighborhood,’ he said, modestly, ‘but—I can hardly tell why—I did not feel like calling at your house.’

“‘Will you let me see your tracts?’ I asked.

He handed me a package, for which I was going to pay him, but he said they were to be given away, and bade me take what I liked. I selected two and begged he would call again, which he promised to do. Ada and I read the tracts over and over again, and then gave them to our people, who all read them. Even poor Susan read them twice, and came, when she had finished them, to ask me if I had any more.

“When the young man came again I tried to buy all he had, but he would not sell them. He said, however, he would furnish me as many as I would distribute; so I took a few, part of which I have kept for ourselves, and the rest I send to you. I know you will be delighted to read them, and when you have done so you must circulate them where they will do good.

“Please accept the enclosed money. If you

do not need it all, you will know how to use it in doing good. Write and tell me all about yourself, for I am wearying to hear from you. Ada sends dear love to you.

“Yours, very sincerely,

“JULIA EMORY.”

Margaret had read this letter with a full heart; now her tears welled over. “I never expected this!” she said. “It was as much as I dared pray for that she might be converted, but God has given her withal a desire to do good to others. After all, the former includes the latter, and in praying for the one I suppose I was praying for both. Poor Susan! who knows but it is because God’s Spirit is striving with her that she acts so strangely? I will pray that Satan may not succeed in blinding her eyes to the blessed truth;” and kneeling alone in her solitary cottage, Margaret poured out her heart in prayer, not alone for Susan, but for the whole family. Nor was Mr. Emory forgotten.

“Julia,” said Mr. Emory, one day after his return from Baltimore, “I have advertised for a

governess for Ada. I hope we may have some applications soon."

"Have you, indeed?" replied Mrs. Emory, with a start, for the thought of putting Ada's education, which had thus far been conducted by herself, into the hands of a stranger, sent a sharp pang through her heart.

"Well, I suppose it is best," she added, cheerfully, "for Ada is growing to be a big girl."

"Yes, and must begin her accomplishments soon. What do you say to a dancing-master, Ada?"

"I don't know, papa," said Ada, laying down her book and crossing over to her father's side. "Am I to learn to dance, papa?"

"Of course you are. Who ever heard of a lady that could not dance?"

"But it is in great, gay parties where people dance, is it not, papa? I have read in books about such things, I think."

"Yes, my girl, and I want, when you are old enough to attend such places, you should be the most accomplished lady that can be found. Shall I engage a master, Julia?" he added, turning to his wife.

Mrs. Emory had been listening with much

pain of heart to her husband's words, while Ada, who had been glancing eagerly from one parent to the other, now had her eyes keenly upon her mother's face.

"What do you say, Julia?" Mr. Emory inquired again, surprised at his wife's silence.

"Ada," said the mother, gently, "you may go to your room, my love."

Ada obeyed, but with ill-concealed reluctance. She felt tempted to linger at the door to hear her mother's reply, but her nobler nature prevailed, and she ran quickly to her room, as if afraid to trust herself.

"I think mamma does not wish me to learn to dance," thought Ada, with a strong feeling of disappointment at her heart, for her father's flattering wish concerning her future had not failed to touch a chord of female vanity in her young bosom. "I do wish I knew what she will say! She said it was time for me to have a governess, because I was growing such a big girl"—and Ada seemed to herself to be very tall at the moment—"but she sent me away when the dancing-master was spoken about;" and poor Ada felt herself greatly injured, or about to be so.

"George," said Mrs. Emory when Ada was gone, "I have not thought anything about Ada's learning to dance for a long time, and I could not answer you at once. I do not like to object to any of your plans for her, but—"

"But what, Julia?" said Mr. Emory, sharply. "I hope you are not going to get pious over it, and preach me a sermon."

Mrs. Emory looked up. There was an expression of sorrow upon her countenance, but she said in her usual tone, "I think, George, as there is no need of haste, I would rather not express any opinion just now. I hope I can do so to-morrow."

"Of course; any time will do, Julia;" and taking up a paper, Mr. Emory began reading with great apparent interest, though in reality he knew very little of what was before him. He felt satisfied that his plan was distasteful to his wife, but he resolved to press it with vigor. He had already, he thought, yielded quite too much to his wife's fancies about religion. Here, then, was a fine opportunity for showing his firmness, and he felt resolved to improve it.



CHAPTER X.

THE NEW GOVERNESS.

WELL, my little girl," said Mr. Emory, next morning, as Ada took her place at the breakfast-table, "did you dream last night of the new master?"

"I don't think I did, papa; but am I to have one?" inquired Ada, eagerly.

"Do you want one, Ada?" said her father, glancing at his wife, who was sitting with her eyes bent upon her plate. She had spent a good part of the previous night in prayer and in reflecting upon her husband's proposal, and she had not left the question unsettled. She felt that her own course of duty was clearly defined. She had earnestly sought God's blessing upon it, and now as the question was asked she looked calmly at Ada, who was vainly seeking to read her mother's wish in her face, but said nothing. Ada saw that both her

parents were waiting for her answer, but how could she reply without knowing her mother's mind? She felt her face growing very hot as she glanced nervously from one to the other, while every instant she became less and less able to speak.

"Answer your papa, my child," said the mother, gently, but Ada's confusion was at its height, and covering her face with both hands, she burst into tears.

"My little girl is nervous this morning," said the mother, drawing her child to her and kissing the little hands, through which the hot tears were trickling. "Go quickly now and compose yourself, and then come and answer your father."

"The poor child was waiting for my approval," said the mother as Ada left the room.

"And you have distressed her very much by withholding it," said Mr. Emory, much irritated.

"I think it well that she should express her own feeling in the matter, George. For myself, I shall offer no opposition to your plan, but trust to Ada's conscience and good sense, by God's

blessing, to direct her in the use she makes of this acquirement."

"But you do not express any opinion in the matter."

"Do you wish me to say what I think, George?"

"Certainly I do."

"I think dancing is well enough as a physical exercise, but I think the benefit all ends there. The knowledge of dancing usually proves a snare to the one who has it, and for my own part, I very greatly fear to expose our child to the temptations which this knowledge will bring."

Mr. Emory was about to reply, when Ada entered the room.

"Well," he said, calling her to his side, "are you ready to tell me whether you would like to learn dancing or not?"

"I think I should like to learn, papa."

"Very well," said Mr. Emory, glancing triumphantly at his wife; "you must have a master, then."

Ada returned to her place at table, but she was ill at ease. For the first time in her life she had decided an important question without

her mother, and she was not satisfied. Neither was Mr. Emory satisfied. He had carried his point, but instead of doing it in the face of opposition, it had only been in the face of a guardedly expressed opinion. The fact that he was not to be opposed took away half the triumph, and when he left the house he felt that the advantage, after all, was decidedly on his wife's side.

“‘I shall trust to Ada's conscience and good sense, under God's blessing, to direct her in the use she makes of this acquirement,’” he repeated slowly to himself. “There it is! She just removes the matter away off into the future, while, in the mean time, she will train the child to her own ideas.

“I don't know how it is,” he went on, the current of his dissatisfied reflections shifting its course a little, “but Julia is so changed she does not seem like herself. She does not thrust her religion upon one in words, but it is seen in all her looks and actions. She never speaks or moves but I can recognize it in some way. It is like a ghost in the house. There is never a room or a corner I enter but there it stands mute and reproachful. It seems to me, some-

times, that even the rustle of her garments says to me, 'Condemned already.' It was a fatal day that brought that old Bible from its lurking-place. But for it we might have continued one of the happiest of families. Now we are hopelessly disunited.

"And like a weak fool I have allowed her to fill up the house with her Bibles. The old thing I should have destroyed years ago has multiplied itself sevenfold in my house. Only last night I saw that fool of a John poring over one in the carriage-house, and I see she has stuck up one in the library.

"This morning I stumbled over an old hymn-book that Ada had dropped on the stair, and when I went to the hall-table for my hat I found a tract under it. I presume it had been put there for my eye."

"Mamma," said Ada, when her father had gone, coming softly to her mother's side, "isn't dancing nice?"

"Many people think it a very pleasant exercise," said Mrs. Emory.

"If you were a little girl, would you learn, mamma?"

"If I were a little girl, Ada, I suppose I should think and feel like other little girls."

"Do you want me to learn, mamma?"

"I want you to try and please your papa, whenever you can without sinning against God."

"But I want to please you both, mamma," said Ada, nervously, "and I think you are not pleased that I should like to learn to dance."

"My darling," said the mother, pained at the evident distress of her child, "it is not the mere act of learning to dance that I am thinking of now so much, but it is the use people make of the art. You told your papa you had read in books about those gay balls and parties where ladies and gentleman meet and spend whole nights in dancing and amusement. If I were there and should ask any one of them to kneel down and pray, or stand up and sing one of your sweet hymns, such as 'Jesus sought me,' or 'Rock of Ages,' he would not do it, and most likely would be angry with me for asking it."

"Now, Ada, do you think it would be right if I were to go and make merry among those who do not care for my blessed Saviour?—who would be displeased if I mentioned him? He tells us

in his holy word to 'come out from among them and be separate;' now, do you not think, Ada, we should watch and pray against entering into this temptation?"

"I see, mamma, why you did not want me to learn to dance. It was because you were afraid I would get to like it so much that I would want to go to those places. But now I do not want even to learn, for I'm sure I don't wish to go with those who do not love God."

"Ada," said the mother, gently, "your papa has set his heart upon your learning, and he does not like to be opposed. I hope, however, you will ask God daily to keep you from allowing your knowledge of dancing to lead you into sin."

"I shall try," said Ada, her eyes filling with tears. "I did think, last night, it would be all very nice, and papa would be so glad to see me a fine lady, but I am sure I do not want to go among those who are not God's friends."

"Then go now, Ada, and ask of God grace to keep you," said Mrs. Emory, kissing her, and as Ada left the room she withdrew to her own to seek the blessing of God upon the words she had just spoken.

"Here's from a lady who wants to be a governess," said Mr. Emory, some time after the events related above, giving an open letter to his wife. "She writes a beautiful hand, I think."

"A real English hand, George. I have not seen this style of writing for many a day. I wonder where she was educated. She is well up in the solid branches," continued Mrs. Emory, reading the letter, "but she mentions, besides, only French and music. She says nothing of drawing. However, I can give Ada her drawing-lessons myself, if she cannot teach it."

"Well," replied Mr. Emory, "be that as it may, I have written to her to come. We will try her for a month, and if we are not mutually pleased, I am to pay her expenses back to Boston. I have also engaged a master to teach you dancing, Ada. He will be here on Monday, and will come twice a week. So you see your education is now to commence in earnest."

Ada was in raptures at the idea of a governess, and already Miss Bell was established on the throne of her imagination as a sort of queen, unlike anybody she had ever seen, and her warm heart admitted her at once into its fullest affections.

"Mamma," exclaimed Ada, one day about a week after the arrival of the letter, "I think Miss Bell has come, for a strange lady has just been set down at the gate, and she is coming in."

"Miss Bell," said Susan, a minute after, opening the door.

"Show her in, Susan," said Mrs. Emory. "I am glad to see you, Miss Bell," she said, taking the young lady kindly by the hand; "this is my little daughter, your future pupil."

Miss Bell took the timidly extended hand with a cordial grasp, saying as she did so, "I trust we shall soon be very warm friends;" and as Ada looked into the frank, beaming face of her young governess she felt sure there would be no friendship lacking on her part.

"Ada may show you your room, Miss Bell," said Mrs. Emory, after a little conversation; "I am sure you are weary, and as it is near dinner-time, you will wish to be alone."

"This is your room," said Ada, opening the door for Miss Bell to enter; "it used to belong to my dear, good nurse, and that door," pointing to one on the side of the apartment, "leads into my room."

"And so this room belonged to your 'dear,

good nurse,'” said Miss Bell, with a smile, as she laid aside her traveling-hat and released from their fastenings a shower of rich auburn curls. “Now give me a kiss,” she exclaimed, stooping and taking Ada with true girlish warmth into her arms; “you are a dear little pet,” she went on, kissing her on both cheeks, “and I am sure I shall love you ever and ever so much!”

Covered with blushes, Ada retreated into her own room, and Miss Bell hastened to arrange her toilet for dinner. She was a bright-looking young woman, fresh and rosy. Her eyes were dark, but mild and expressive, her mouth large, but well formed, and her teeth pearly white. She was above the medium height, easy and graceful in her movements, and largely endowed with that most important requisite to the successful teacher—healthful vigor.

As she arranged her luxuriant hair she glanced round the room with evident satisfaction, and before she had finished her toilet every article of furniture, and even the pretty pattern of the carpet, had been carefully inventoried in her active mind.

“I wish poor mother could see this,” she said

to herself. "It would do her dear heart good. I suppose she would say, 'It's quite too fine for you, Effie!' but she need not fear, the dear blessed mother! I am not going to be proud, even if I should be successful, which is all uncertain as yet." She parted the white muslin curtains and looked down upon the garden trees below. "Oh what beautiful hills!" she exclaimed as her eyes wandered from nearer objects and eagerly took in the whole rich landscape beyond. "They are very, very beautiful, but, after all, not much like our grand old mountains of St. Armand. I wonder if Mrs. Emory will let me walk to those hills? If she will, I shall run all over and around them before a month's end;" and her cheerful face grew almost beautiful in its enthusiasm.

The bell broke up her musings, and, a moment after, Ada appeared to conduct her to the dining-room. John had set her scanty luggage at the door, and she paused to place it within. There were only two small boxes, a basket, and a satchel, and as she glanced round the room in which she was placing them she felt keenly the contrast between the rough outfit and the furnishing of the room. But she had a brave

heart, and closing the door quickly, she drew Ada's willing hand within her own, and with a light step descended to the dining-room.

Mr. Emory received her with easy politeness, and the gentle, thoughtful attentions of his wife made her feel quite at home. When dinner was over Mrs. Emory showed her the little school-room, arranged with her what Ada's studies should be, and giving John a list of school-books, despatched him to make the purchases. These preliminaries settled, Effie went to her room to unpack and get her things arranged.

"Here is a nice little closet for your dresses," said Mrs. Emory, opening a door at one end of the room, "and there is a bureau, which is also for your use."

Effie glanced nervously at her small boxes, and thought how scanty were their contents, and how large the space they were to occupy, but she said nothing. Mrs. Emory very soon withdrew, and taking a bundle of keys from her pocket, Effie commenced her task. It did not take long to unfold and shake out the plain pink morning-dress, the two or three gingham and print dresses, the pretty blue de-

laine, and the one plain silk—her mother's wedding-dress modernized for Effie.

These, with a few other articles, were soon hung round the closet, and then her small stock of linen was neatly arranged in the bottom of a large drawer. A few carefully-preserved school-books and a half dozen other volumes, including a small Bible, constituted her library, which she arranged on a small rosewood shelf beside her window. Then she piled her empty boxes at the farther end of the closet, where there still remained room for as many more, and sitting down, she covered her face with both hands.

"Here, then, is my little all!" she thought. "How I am to get along among these fine people, with all their stylish ways, I don't quite see. Ah, Effie Bell!" she exclaimed, half aloud, rising and looking at her desponding face in the glass, "you are very poor and very proud! Never mind; go to work, be helpful and hopeful, think of others and not of yourself, and by and by everything will work round all right." Then drawing some note-paper from a rude portfolio which she had made for herself, she wrote a brief letter to her mother.



CHAPTER XI.

THE HOME AT ST. ARMAND.

WHEN her letter was done, Effie put on her hat and shawl and ran down to inquire the way to the post-office.

"Give me your letter," said Mrs. Emory, "unless you prefer to walk, and I will send it with mine. In the mean time, if you like to read, you can find plenty of books in the library. Shall I show you the way?"

"Oh yes, if you please!" said Effie, delighted, and following Mrs. Emory, she soon found herself among the large and choice collection of books in the library.

"Oh," she exclaimed, when Mrs. Emory had gone, raising her hands in amazement, "what a feast I shall have! Dear James, if you could only be here to read with me," she continued, running over the titles of books which she and her brother had heard of, but had vainly wished

to see, and many others of which they had never heard. "What an opportunity you might have if you could only be allowed an hour a day in this place!"

The tea-bell rang before Effie dreamed that the afternoon was half gone, and she reluctantly obeyed the call to leave this new world of enjoyment and instruction.

"Miss Bell," said Mrs. Emory when tea was over, "will you sit with me a while this evening? I should like to talk with you."

Effie would gladly have returned to the library, but she cheerfully accepted the invitation, and following Mrs. Emory into her little parlor, sat down by an open window that looked into the garden, and soon found herself engaged in so pleasant and profitable a conversation that she forgot how the evening was gliding away, and was surprised, at length, on glancing out of the window, to see that the sun was setting, and the day, which had promised to be so long and lonely, had almost reached its close. Mrs. Emory rose and rang the bell, and in a few minutes the servants had all assembled in the room.

"It is our custom," she said, turning to Effie,

“at sunset, to read together a portion of Scripture, and ask God’s blessing. Would you like to join us in reading?”

Effie took the book that was offered her, and when the chapter was read knelt with the rest while Mrs. Emory engaged in prayer. She prayed for her family, for all then present, but especially for the stranger who had that day joined their little circle. It was a service plain and simple, but adapted to move the heart.

When devotions were ended the servants withdrew, and Effie was left alone with Mrs. Emory and Ada.

“I trust, Miss Bell,” said Mrs. Emory, in a kindly tone, “that you have already given your heart to the Saviour?”

Effie reddened. “I have been brought up to read my Bible and respect religion,” she replied, with a good deal of reserve.

“Pardon my asking, but I have been hoping very much that you were a Christian. I hope you have found salvation in him who has come to seek and to save the lost.”

“I have not been accustomed to regard myself as particularly sinful,” answered Effie, “though of course I make no pretensions to

goodness. I consider myself quite as safe as those who make a high profession."

"The peril or safety of others is a matter with which, after all, we have very little to do," replied Mrs. Emory. "If others are in danger, it makes our danger no less. In respect to salvation, we each stand alone before God, either as acquitted or condemned. The Bible teaches us that we are all lost and ruined sinners, 'condemned already,' not because we have done this or that, but because we 'have not believed on the only begotten Son of God.'"

There was a long silence.

"You will find a lamp in your room, Miss Bell," said Mrs. Emory, at length, rising and bidding Effie good-night. "Come, Ada; the air is damp, and it is getting too dark to read;" and closing the window, she accompanied Ada to her room, and Effie retired to hers.

Effie sat for a long time at her window, buried in deep thought. At length she rose, and with a sadder heart than usual prepared herself for rest. New thoughts had been stirred within her, and they had awakened others that went far back to her childhood, when a father,

long dead, had held her on his knees, and told her of the sinfulness of the heart, and of the great love of God in sending a Saviour into the world to provide redemption for the lost, and had again and again urged her, though a little child, to look to this compassionate Saviour. But she had never really felt the need of the Saviour, or looked into the depths of her own heart to see the sin that lurked there. Kind, generous, and unselfish almost to a fault, she had grown up to womanhood fancying herself good because she loved goodness, and safe from the condemnation of God's law because, in comparing herself with those who professed to love him, she failed to discover in them virtues that were lacking in herself.

The conversation that had just occurred had displeased her. She did not like being set down as a guilty and condemned sinner, yet she knew her Bible too well not to realize that it was not Mrs. Emory, but God's word, that condemned her. Yet that word had not taken deep root in her heart, and after a few minutes' discomfort she fell into a profound sleep.

Lessons commenced the next morning in

earnest. Miss Bell proved herself an enthusiastic teacher; and Ada, a no less enthusiastic learner. The days and weeks of the trial month passed by like a dream. Effie spent all her leisure time in the library, rising as soon as the early light would permit her to study, and thus book after book was devoured during the hours which others spent in sleep.

One day she was unexpectedly summoned to the library to meet Mr. and Mrs. Emory.

"It is the last day of the month!" she exclaimed, glancing nervously at her calendar, and then with a good deal of trepidation she hurried to the library.

"I have sent for you, Miss Bell," said Mr. Emory, handing her a chair, "to have the question of your stay with us definitely settled. Perhaps you are wishing to go?"

"I am ready to stay or go, sir, as you may wish. I certainly have nothing to complain of. I have spent a very happy month."

"If it rests with us, then," said Mr. Emory, smiling, "your stay is decided upon at once. We are well pleased with your services, and if you are pleased with us, no more need be said. You and Mrs. Emory can settle terms between

yourselves;" and putting on his hat, Mr. Emory hurried away.

Effie breathed more freely.

"You proposed no salary when you wrote," said Mrs. Emory; "perhaps you will do so now."

"No, I cannot think of it. I have never taught before. I am young and untried: please give me what you think I earn, and I will be satisfied."

"What would you say to three hundred the first year? and after that, if you do well, it shall be more." Poor Effie! her wildest dream had never come up to this. She stammered out her thanks, and with brimful eyes was hurrying off to her room to hide the tears, when Mrs. Emory called her back. "Here are your month's wages, Miss Bell; if you should want any more before the end of another month, tell me, and I will supply you."

Effie tried to speak her thanks, but words failed her. Mrs. Emory noticed her emotion, and said kindly, "Never mind, dear; you have earned it all; there is no need of thanks!"

Mrs. Emory had endeavored in a quiet way to learn something of Effie's circumstances, but

the most she had been able to ascertain was that her father was dead, and her mother poor ; beyond this, Effie's reticence had baffled all inquiry. But her unusual emotion at receiving the payment for her first month of service revealed to Mrs. Emory a history of poverty and weary struggling which touched her sympathizing heart and brought the young stranger nearer to her than ever before.

"Twenty-five dollars, and all in gold!" cried Effie as she entered her own room and carefully closed the door. "This, then, is the first fruit of my work—the beginning of what my poor, patient mother has fitted me to accomplish!" and dropping the glittering coins slowly, one after another, upon the table, she cast herself down upon the floor and sobbed hysterically. "It shall all go to mother, every cent of it, and should if there were a hundred times as much. What a dear, good angel is Mrs. Emory! How hard I shall work to please her!" and Effie rose again to her feet, and gathering up the bright gold coins in her hand, looked at them as if she were never to tire of the sight. Then snatching up a piece of paper, she wrote hurriedly:

“MY DARLING MOTHER: I am so overjoyed I cannot delay a minute to tell you of my good fortune.

“Mr. and Mrs. Emory have just been kind enough to tell me they are pleased with my services, and have promised to pay me three hundred dollars for the first year, and more after that, if I do well.

“Mrs. Emory paid me the whole of my month’s wages, and I am going to send it to you to-day, and I know you will be just as glad as I am. Now you can buy James some clothes and pay what remains on the price of his books.

“Don’t work too hard, there’s a good mother! Think what a nice sum I am going to send you every month, so take care of yourself just as much as you can. With dear love to James,

“Your own

EFFIE.”

Effie Bell was scarcely eighteen years old, yet so full had her life been of care and effort that she seemed to herself much older. She was accustomed often to say to her mother, “I don’t see, mother, how it is I am only eighteen! It seems to me I have lived two or three lifetimes

since poor father died; I think I should be twice eighteen at the very least!"

While yet a young man, her father, Andrew Bell, had left his native land, and sought an emigrant's home in this country, bringing with him his young wife and infant daughter. For some time Mr. Bell sought employment in the city, but in vain, and weary and disappointed, he finally resolved to go farther into the country and purchase a farm.

It was in the wild and romantic district of St. Armand, a little north of the boundary-line between Canada and the State of Vermont, that he finally selected a small piece of land, erected a log house, and settled down to meet with a brave heart the trials of pioneer life.

No one has ever traversed this romantic region without being impressed by the grandeur of its magnificent scenery. Artist or poet need wish for no finer studies than here present themselves at almost every point. High ridges, isolated peaks, luxuriant valleys, fertile uplands, and beautiful streams afford a rich and changeful variety of landscape scarcely surpassed in any country.

"Here," thought Andrew Bell as he stood in the low doorway of his log cabin, "I think, with God's blessing, we may be very happy. We shall miss many of the privileges and comforts of old Scotland, but strong arms, and willing hearts, and a humble trust in God, are all we need to make us happy here."

"Come here, Kate," he said, and in a moment his young wife stood beside him. "To-morrow is Saturday, and we need a holiday. Would you like to climb to the top of yon 'pinnacle' and see the country around?"

"Yes, indeed, Andrew," said the wife, "but what shall we do with Effie? She could never climb, you know."

"Why, I'll take her on my back, of course," replied Andrew, smiling that his wife should have thought of a difficulty of that sort; "and we'll have a good holiday while we are about it, for we'll not get another very soon after we begin work at the farm."

It was a very lovely June day, with a clear sky and a bright sun above, when Andrew and his wife reached the top of the "pinnacle" almost at the foot of which lay his rude cabin and his uncleared farm.

"I'd like to know who cut these trees," he said, putting down his little girl on the mossy carpet at the foot of a huge rock, and wiping the moisture from his forehead; "I suppose, however, it was some rich man who wanted to open a view from here."

"And I'm sure we're much obliged to him, Andrew," said Kate as she gazed admiringly down from a great rock, the top of which she had with difficulty reached. "Oh, Andrew, come up here! it's most glorious!" she exclaimed, with sudden enthusiasm.

"Well, take the baby, then," he said, holding up the little one to his wife, and in a moment more he was standing by her side.

Andrew reverently uncovered his head, and raising his hand toward heaven, stood for a moment in silent prayer.

"It overcomes one, Kate," he said, turning with moistened eyes toward his wife, "to get so near to God as one seems to be here. I think I never felt him so near to me as in this place, so solitary, so sublime, so near to heaven. Look yonder, Kate, and yonder," he continued, pointing from object to object and from point to point, and then both stood silent and absorbed,

with greedy eyes taking in the vast and magnificent landscape.

To one who stands upon this grand pinnacle to-day the scene will be widely different from what they beheld. Then vast forests lay in primeval strength on every hand, hiding many a lovely valley and winding stream which the hand of cultivation has since opened to view. Now, away to the north, sixty miles distant, the great city of Montreal is faintly discernible through the blue canopy of smoke and mist that seems ever to rest upon it. Stretching southward from the St. Lawrence, and teeming with its busy population, lies the great French country, in the midst of which, some thirty miles distant, the mission buildings of La Grande Ligne may be distinctly seen. Turning to the south-west, Lake Champlain appears in view, while beyond, the far-off hills of New York shut off the prospect. Sweeping round toward the south, we follow the green hills of Vermont, clearly traceable against the horizon, until the eye rests upon the bald height of Mansfield Mountain, sixty miles to the south.

Turning to the east, some thirty miles away

the grim pinnacle of Owl's Head shoots up into the heavens, hiding from our sight the blue Memphremagog beyond, while all the intervening country of fertile field, rich meadow, green hills, and fertilizing streams lies outstretched on either hand, making up one of the loveliest landscapes upon which the eye can rest.

But at the time of which we write much that may now be seen was wanting; still, there was enough to fill the heart of Andrew Bell and his wife with wonder and admiration, and when they again reached their rude home in the wilderness, they felt that they had been more than repaid for all their fatigue.

Six years passed away. The little piece of cleared land around the cottage had gradually been enlarged; the great stumps had many of them disappeared, sheds and outbuildings had accumulated, a few fruit trees were growing in the rear of the cottage, and flowers blooming at the front bespoke the refinement and good taste of the inmates.

Effie was now eight years old, strong and healthy, with ready feet and willing hands already practicing the hard lessons of daily

toil. A little brother six years younger than herself was now her daily companion, increasing her childish cares, but adding greatly to her joys. The two happy children filled the home of Andrew and his wife with perpetual gladness, and as the father looked at his little ones and thought of the future, his heart swelled with pride, and the desire to be rich for their sakes for the first time took possession of his heart.

"Kate," he said, one day, "I want a team of stout oxen. The steers are not strong enough to do the heavy work that has to be done. I am going to clear the ten-acre wood lot, besides doing a good deal of ploughing; and then, too, there is timber to haul for a new barn, you know. I am thinking I will go to the squire and borrow a few hundred dollars on a mortgage of the farm. I can clear it off, if I'm blessed, in a year or so, and then we shall be in a fair way to get on in the world."

Kate offered a feeble protest, but Andrew had made up his mind, and was not to be turned from his purpose. She silently and with gloomy foreboding acquiesced, and in a few days Andrew had the money, and the squire had a mortgage on the farm.



CHAPTER XII.

JAMES BELL AT SCHOOL.

BUT success did not follow the possession of money. First came the failure of crops, then the loss of stock, and finally, what was worst of all, his own health began to give way, and before the end of the year Andrew Bell was dying of consumption.

"I don't know, Kate," he said, one day, "what is to be done with the farm. If I had been spared, I think I could have lifted the mortgage by the end of another year, but now—"

"The Lord's will be done, Andrew," said Kate, choking back her tears; "think no more of the farm, only be ready for the call which is very near."

"Yes, yes, Kate; thank God I'm ready for that, come when it will! That was settled years ago, when I left the drink and found Christ. Since then there has been no cloud on

the heaven side of my life, and the earth side has been pretty sunny, too, but I would have liked—”

“Your faith is failing, Andrew,” again interposed the wife. “Do just what God tells you—leave your fatherless children to him;” and poor Kate dashed the tears from her eyelids quickly that her husband might not see them. “God’s promises belong to me and the children, Andrew, just as much as ever they did to you, and I am resting upon them. They will not fail.”

“No, no, my good Kate, you will not rest upon them in vain. God will never forsake the one that trusts him, and I know how strong your trust is; it has always been stronger than mine.”

A month later, Andrew Bell was at rest. For a few days the cottage was strangely still; the neighbors came and went quietly, and spoke in soft, low tones to the widow and her wondering little ones; there was a sorrowful funeral, but there was no wailing or bitter outcry, and then Catharine Bell and her little children began the battle of life alone. For two years the lonely widow and her little girl wrought with weary hands all the household toil and the heavy farm

labor. Sometimes a sympathizing neighbor would come with his team and give her "a lift" at the ploughing or the "hauling in," so with this and the little she could hire she worked on, but at the end of two years she had accumulated scarcely half the money needed.

Then the cattle and the pigs and the poultry were sold, but still there was not enough money to redeem the farm, so the cold-hearted squire foreclosed the mortgage. But the heart of Catharine did not fail. When she saw that the farm must go, she sold what remained to be disposed of, gathered her vegetables, and removed all that could be taken away to the unoccupied house of a neighbor a mile or two from the "The Corners," as the little post-town was familiarly called, and there she sat down to plan for the future.

"What little money I have must be put in the bank for the children's education," she said, stoutly, "and I will try to support myself and them by day's work. The children must have an education—it was what Andrew always looked forward to—and by God's blessing I shall give it to them. Effie must go to the district

school and teach James at home, and I must get work of some kind to do. Effie has got a nice start in her books already, and by and by, perhaps, she will be able to teach school and earn something, so as to help herself and James."

The plan was carried out. Effie, now eleven years old, was sent to the common school, while James, six years younger, took his morning and evening lessons at home, working with his mother during the day at such tasks as his infant strength could perform. In this manner three years passed away, and Catharine and her children had not only supported themselves, but added a little to the small fund which had been laid aside for future use.

In the mean time, Effie had mastered the various branches usually taught in the common schools, and was making rapid advancement in music and the higher branches of learning under the tuition of her mother's minister and his wife, who had kindly offered to help her in her studies.

One day when Effie was nearly fourteen Mrs. Bell had an unexpected call from her minister.

"I have come to tell you," he said, "that I expect to remove to Montreal, to enter upon a

charge there. I should like Effie to go with us and attend school in the city. I will board and clothe her for the help she can give my wife; so if you are willing, and can manage to pay her tuition, the matter may be settled at once."

Mrs. Bell gratefully thanked the kind minister for his proposal. Effie was in raptures at the idea, and in a few weeks she was duly established in her new home in the city.

Sadly did it diminish the poor mother's funds to pay for Effie's tuition, but hope was strong in Catharine's heart; and cheered by the knowledge that her child was straining every nerve to make the most of her advantages, she toiled on with a strong will, supporting Effie in the city and keeping James at school in the country during at least half of each year.

"Mother," said James, one evening, pushing away his slate, which he had been rapidly covering with figures, "when is Effie coming home?"

"In about a month, I think," answered the mother, laying down her work and taking a letter from her pocket, which she slowly unfolded; "why do you ask, my son?"

"Because I think, somehow, the master isn't doing me much good, and I was thinking, if she

was at home, she could teach me. I could work by day, and study during the long evenings at home."

Mrs. Bell did not answer for some time; at length, putting the letter again into her pocket, she said: "What would you think, my son, of going to Boston to live?"

"To live!" exclaimed James, springing from his seat with such violence as to upset his chair and make the rickety table tremble. "Why, mother, it was only yesterday I was reading about the schools, and libraries, and chances there are for a boy to be educated in Boston, but I never once thought I should ever go there to live!" and the boy's dark eyes glowed with excitement and hope as he spoke. "But why did you ask, mother?"

"I have just received this letter from my cousin, Jenny Thompson, who came to this country the same year that we came out, and has lived in Boston ever since. She was a first-class dressmaker in the old country, and by steady application to business since she came here she has gained quite an independent fortune. She thinks if I would come to the city we could easily support ourselves, and you could

at the same time be having first-rate advantages for carrying on your education. She says that if I will come, she will help me to get settled and find some business."

"What business, mother?" asked James, nervously, for he was growing very anxious at seeing his mother working so incessantly, and had more than once tasked his young brain to devise means by which he could lighten her burdens.

"It may be as well not to talk of that just now, my son. I rather fear Effie may not like the plan, so we'll let the matter rest until she comes home."

James did not press his inquiries, though his anxiety prompted him more than once to do so, but the matter was none the less in his thoughts, and many an air-castle did he build during that month of anxious expectation.

At length Effie was at home. For almost three years mother and daughter had not met, and when Mrs. Bell saw how tall and womanly her child had grown, and how changed in all her looks and ways, it is no wonder her heart misgave her, and she thought, "Oh, if she should be really as much changed as she ap-

pears, how could she ever come down to this poor home and the life of toil that awaits her!"

But when Effie took her part in the work of the house just as she did when she was a little girl, the poor mother's heart was reassured, and she felt no longer afraid to speak to her about the matter that had engaged so many of her thoughts during the past month.

"Let us go, mother," exclaimed Effie, after she had listened to all her mother's plans and proposals. "It is not late now, and if we start soon, we can get settled and have James at his studies before winter is fairly begun. I can help you until some situation opens for me to teach, and at the same time I can be helping James with his lessons."

"Ah, Effie," said the mother, brushing away the tears which her child's ready sympathy had brought to her eyes, "you are a great comfort to me. I thought you might have got lifted up, being so long in the city, but I find you have too much of your father's nature to be spoiled so easily."

"Never mind, mother," said Effie, laughing; "don't you spoil me now with praise;" and running to her brother, who was studying in the

chimney corner, she caught away his books, wound her arms around his neck, and whispered: "We are going to Boston to live, James, and you are going to school! What do you think of that?"

"And what is mother going to do?" said James, when the first excitement was over.

"Never mind that," said Effie, patting his brown cheek. "Mother and I have our plans, and all you have to do is to think about going to school."

"You and mother are not going to drudge for me," cried the boy, his eyes flashing; "I am going to work and support myself, and do what I can for mother."

"Not yet, James. By and by you may be as independent as you like, but at present you are to go to school, you know. You and mother have worked hard for a long time for me, and now we are going to work for you a while, and then you are to take care of mother and let her live at her ease, while I shall perhaps become a famous teacher in some great institution, or a notable writer for the magazines, or something more wonderful still;" and Effie opened her brown eyes with such a merry look that James

laughed outright, quite forgetting, for the moment, his grave resolution to push his own fortunes in the world without anybody's help.

There was a great deal of planning and consulting between mother and daughter, and not a little hard work, before everything was in readiness for the removal. But at length it was effected, and the widow Bell and her children found themselves comfortably settled in a small but pleasant house in the city, and casting about for the means of self-support.

One morning, soon after they were established in their new home, James was surprised at seeing a large card in the front window, and turning it round, he read: "Mrs. Bell, Laundress."

"Mother," he cried, turning quickly round, "Effie, what does this mean?"

"Just what it says, my son," said the mother, coming forward and settling the card again in its place. "It means that your mother is going to take in washing to support herself and her family. It took all the money we had in the world to get here and get settled; all the rest we expect to earn with our hands."

"Well," cried the boy, impetuously, "I am not going to school, that is settled!"

"Not so fast, my dear boy," said the mother, tenderly; "your sister went out yesterday and entered your name and made arrangements for you in one of the best schools in the city. You are to begin to-day. Here is a list of your books, and Effie will go with you, after breakfast is over, to get them."

"But the money, mother? You said you had spent all you had."

"I borrowed enough of my good cousin to pay for them, and to keep us comfortable till work comes in. So, my son, go to work, trusting in God, and by his blessing on our industry we shall be supplied with everything we need."

James turned to a window, where he stood for some time in silence.

"Mother," he exclaimed, at length, "I'll find something to do too. I am not going to be a doll-baby, and have you and Effie slaving yourselves for me. I can at least work nights and mornings, and I am going to do it!"

"Very well, my son, you can try it; but recollect, never undertake anything without asking God's blessing upon it, for if you do, even though it seem to prosper for a time, it will avail but little in the end. Your father, James, never

began any piece of work, even the least, without asking God to bless it. Follow his example if you wish to prosper."

James felt nervous and excited as he entered the school that morning and looked around upon the crowd of strange faces. But the kindness of the principal soon reassured him. He took the little stranger kindly by the hand, spoke a few encouraging words to him, ascertained what he had previously done in his studies, and assigned him his work and his class.

"You will have to work hard," said the teacher when he had introduced him to the boys of his class; "there is not a drone here now, and I feel quite sure, from what you have already done, that you are not to be the first one."

"I wonder what is keeping James so long tonight? Surely school must have been out an hour or more."

"Here he is, mother!" said Effie, opening the door. "What makes you so late? Did you get kept in the first day?" she inquired, playfully.

"No, indeed!" answered James, "but I have been looking for work. I haven't had any luck, but to-morrow I shall try again, and keep trying till I get it."

"Bravo!" said the sister; "there's a ring of the right metal in you; keep up courage, and you will succeed."

"Trust in God, rather," said the mother, solemnly. "You are too apt to forget that, my daughter!"

The winter passed rapidly away. Part of the time Effie worked in Jenny Thompson's establishment, and part of the time she assisted her mother, whose work increased every week. At length, Mr. Emory's advertisement attracted her notice, and she promptly applied for the situation; with what success we have already seen.





CHAPTER XIII.

THE BOOKSELLER'S BOY.



LETTER for you, and one for Miss Bell," said John, one evening, as Mrs. Emory met him in the hall. Effie was sitting with Ada in the library, but she came forward quickly on hearing her name mentioned, and glancing at her letter, she hurried away to her room to read it. Mrs. Emory entered the library, and drew a chair toward the light.

"At length I have a letter from our good Margaret; Ada, would you like to hear it?"

"Oh yes, mamma, if you please;" and Ada laid aside her book and drew her chair nearer her mother to listen. The letter ran thus :

"DEAR MRS. EMORY: Your kind letter has been long unanswered, but I feel sure you will forgive me when you hear the reasons for my long silence.

“A few days after your letter came to hand, my sister, who resides near me, was taken sick, and I nursed her for a whole month before I could leave her for even a day. During this time many in the village had been seized with the same disease, and for another month I did almost nothing but attend the sick.

“At length I was myself taken down, and was brought very low, but God has raised me up again. May it be that I may glorify him more fully than ever before! I am not strong enough yet to write much, but I want to tell you that the dear Saviour was very precious to me in my sickness, and if it had been God’s will for me to die, I should have had no fear.

“Tell dear Ada that I nursed a sweet little girl about her age through all her sickness, and at last she died in my arms. She had been my scholar in the Sunday-school, and I loved her very dearly. She was not afraid to die, for she loved the Saviour. When I told her she was dying, she said, ‘Don’t cry, teacher; you have taught me about Jesus, and I am going to live with him.’

“Those were her last words, and pretty soon she was gone. Oh, how much I want to know

that Ada has really and truly come to Jesus, and is happy in him !

“ I am so glad of all you tell me about John, and very sorry indeed for poor Susan. Dear Mrs. Emory, be patient with her—I know you will—and by and by you will have your reward.

“ Thanks for the tracts you sent me. I gave them all away to some men who are employed on the public works near this place. Two of them came afterward to talk about what they had read, and one of the two has since been brought to Christ. Several of the men are serious. I used the money you sent to buy Testaments for them. They all seemed very thankful to receive them, and I believe are trying to understand what God’s word teaches. So the seed you have begun to sow is taking root. May you live to see much fruit ! With love to dear Ada,

“ Yours in much weakness,

“ MARGARET.”

“ Mamma,” said Ada, rising and coming close to her mother, “ I am sure I don’t love the Saviour, and if I were to die, as that little girl did, I know I should not go to him.”

"Ada," said Mrs. Emory, drawing her child close to her, "it was your childish words that first led me to think of the sinfulness of my own heart. How is it that you are so long finding out the precious love of Jesus?"

"I don't think I really ever pray with my heart, mamma. It seems to me I just say my prayers: it does not seem to be my heart that prays at all. Lately, I am getting to think almost entirely about my lessons—especially my dancing-lessons, mamma—and very little about the Saviour. My Bible seems to me such a dull book, mamma, I only read it because I think I ought, and sometimes I'm sure I do not like it the least bit."

"That just shows, Ada, how very, very fast the power of sin is growing in your heart, and how much more easily you learn to love what pleases yourself than what pleases Christ. What you tell me, my child, distresses me very much."

"Oh, mamma," cried Ada, bursting into tears, "what shall I do?"

"I hope, my child, that God will give you a clear view of the sinfulness of your heart, and make you feel how much you need the Saviour.

I want you to see just the state you are in. Sin is working in you more and more every day—making you blinder, and harder, and more unwilling to go to Christ. While God is calling to you by his Spirit and from his word, and seeking to convince you of the awful ruin that is awaiting you if you do not flee to Christ, Satan has almost persuaded you to give up your Bible, and made you to care for other things more than for Christ and salvation. God's Holy Spirit is sent to show us our danger, and the only way to escape from it. I hope he will make you see that you are really bad—that God, who cannot look upon sin, could never, never take you into heaven, where the holy angels are, unless you were washed from every sin in the precious blood of Jesus.

“I trust also, Ada, that this blessed Spirit will lead you to Jesus, who will accept you, and love you, and wash you in his own blood.”

“If I should go to him to-night, mamma, just as I am, would he take me, do you think?”

“Yes, Ada, surely he would, because he has said so over and over again. Believe what God says, go to him in earnest, confess your sin and unbelief, and ask to be forgiven for the dear

Redeemer's sake, and he will not turn you away."

Ada rose, and kissing her mother in silence, went away to her own room, while the mother sought the solitude of her chamber, where she might wrestle with God in prayer for the salvation of her child. Long the mother remained in prayer, but at last her faith laid hold of God's promise; a sweet peace settled upon her spirit.

As soon as Effie was alone she broke the seal of her letter. There was a short letter from her mother, and a long one from James. She opened the former with a trembling hand, and read:

"MY DEAR EFFIE: Your welcome note, telling me of the great good-fortune that God has been pleased to send you, reached me the day after it was written, and I assure you I rejoiced with you. The money, too, came safely, and has greatly relieved me by enabling me to pay dear Jenny Thompson the last of what I was owing her so long, to get James some more suitable clothes, and to make some improvements on my laundry, which have been so much needed.

"You must not send me all you have any more, my child. Keep half of it to supply yourself with clothes and books, and such other things as you need. I am getting a good deal of work now, and James is earning a little, so we need not take so much from you.

"Thank God with me, Effie, for his great mercies, and let us not forget that the more he gives us, the more love and service and obedience he requires from us. I trust that in your anxiety to serve me you do not forget what you owe to him.

"Your mother,

"CATHARINE BELL."

Effie did not stay to reflect very much upon the closing exhortation of her mother's letter, but opening the letter from her brother, read as follows:

"DEAR SISTER EFFIE: I've got so much to tell you I don't know where to begin, but I guess I'll begin with the school. I like it better and better every day, and I am getting along splendidly. I'm trying this term for a prize, and the boys all say I'll get it, but I don't

much think I will. There is one boy who I'm pretty sure will take it, and I wouldn't care much if I did lose it for him, for he's such a good fellow. He isn't like any other boy in school, Effie; he never quarrels, or swears, or does mean things, and then he is everybody's friend. The meaner a boy uses him, the surer he is to be good to him.

"He is two years older than I am, and he would have been in the next class above me, only he got sick and had to be out of school a whole year, and that put him down with me. His name is Henry Adams; he is from New York, and the boys all say he is rich, though he'll never tell a word about that himself.

"I suppose the teachers all think I am doing very well, for they never keep me in for bad tasks, and I don't think they give me bad marks, though I can't tell much about that yet. Nobody ever knows about his marks till the end of the term, and then they read them all out before everybody.

"Well, Effie, I've got some work to do at last. I'll tell you all about it. I believe I'd been up and down past that bookstore a dozen times at the very least, and did not dare go in,

it was such a grand place. I was sure nobody would want a boy there, but one day I plucked up courage, and in I went. A dear old man came forward, with nice brown hair that curled all round his temples and neck, and such pleasant gray eyes, and said: 'Well, my boy, what do you want?'

" 'I want work, if you please, sir,' said I. 'I go to school, but I would like to work mornings and nights, if anybody would hire me. I want, sir, very much to help my mother, for she is poor and has to work too hard, and you see, sir, I am strong and healthy.'

" 'I see,' said he, smiling; and then he went on and asked me dozens of questions about things, and all the while he kept smiling at my answers, until I began to think he was making sport of me.

" Finally he asked me if I was honest. I don't think I was angry, Effie, but I felt myself getting awfully hot, and my throat swelled till I thought I'd choke, and then I turned right away, for I thought he'd no business to insult me because he was a rich man and I a poor lad. But he called me back, and said, 'I did not mean to hurt your feelings, my boy; come to me to-

morrow morning, and I'll try you.' So I went, and kept on going for two weeks, and he never said a word about paying me, but at the end of the second week he handed me two silver dollars, and said, 'Now, Jimmy'—that's what he calls me—'you may come to me as long as you like, and I will give you this much—at least while you are as good a boy as you have been, and more when I think you earn it.'

"I tell you, Effie, I felt as if I'd come into some great fortune. I don't believe I slept two hours that first night, thinking of what good luck I'd got. Well, I've kept on going for a month now. Sometimes he gives me a dime or two extra if I've had pretty hard work. Yesterday he told me he had been to see my teachers, and had heard such a good report of me that he was going to give me a book. So he gave me—what do you think, Effie?—a beautiful new Bible, with clasps and gilt edges, and morocco covers!

"I must not forget to tell you that Harry Adams came home with me one night last week and stayed to tea. Just think of it, Effie, and we so poor! Mother felt much worried when I told her he was coming, but when I told her all

about him, and how good and religious he is, she said I might bring him. Well, he and mother had a splendid time. They sat and talked a whole hour after tea, and Harry went on and talked as old-fashioned as a preacher, every bit. Mother wiped her eyes, Effie, when he was gone, and said: 'That boy will be a preacher, James, some day.' I wouldn't wonder a bit if what she said should come true, and if you'd hear the way he talks to me sometimes, you'd think so too.

"But it is getting late, and I've got some hard lessons to learn, so good-bye.

"Your brother,

"JAMES."

Ada entered the breakfast-room late the following morning, and took her place at the table in silence, but there was an expression of such quiet happiness upon her face that it was noticed by all.

"What pleasant fancies have come to you, my girl," inquired her father, "that you bring such a bright face down stairs with you?"

"Perhaps Miss Ada has had joyful dreams," said Effie, "though I really do not know when

she found them, for I was up late, and she was up later than I."

"Were you reading, Ada?" asked Mr. Emory.

"Yes, papa."

"And what new wonder have you got hold of to keep yourself awake with? You know I don't like this sitting up at night to read."

"I was reading the Bible, papa, and I did not notice how late it was."

Mr. Emory started, and looked keenly at her.

"Do you sit up nights to read the Bible?" he inquired, sharply.

"I did last night, papa," said Ada, in great confusion, for she had never known much of her father's displeasure, and his manner terrified her.

"Well, let this be the last of it!" he said, with severity. "If I ever hear of it again, I shall take the book away from you."

Ada struggled hard to keep back her tears, but they would flow; and as soon as her father was gone she ran and buried her face in her mother's bosom and sobbed aloud. Miss Bell with instinctive delicacy retired.

"Ada, my darling," said the mother, soothingly, "remember your father's wish, and do not sit late, even to read your Bible, but read it the

more during the day. And now tell me, my child, what made you look so happy?"

"Oh, mamma," exclaimed Ada, her face glowing through her tears, "last night I went to my room more wretched than ever I could tell you! I went and hid myself away in the closet, and there I cried and prayed, I cannot tell how long. But after a long time, all at once, there came to my mind, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' So I just seemed to come right to Jesus, and I told him how sinful I was, that I had never loved him or served him, and how much I wished now to leave everything else and love and serve him. Then I begged him to take me, and wash away my sins in his own blood, and make me his child. And while I was speaking, mamma, I grew as glad as though he had really been doing all I asked him to do.

"Then I got my Bible, and read and read, I don't know how long, and it seemed all the time as if every word was said to me. I don't know how it was, mamma, that I should have felt so glad, but it seemed to me that God loved me and listened to me, and it made me very happy."



CHAPTER XIV.

THE HIDDEN BIBLE FOUND.

FOR the first time in his life Mr. Emory was angry with his child, yet why, it was not easy to explain even to himself. It was not the fact of her having a lamp burning in her chamber, for she had always been indulged with a night-lamp, so secured as to involve no danger either to herself or to the house, and whenever she wished she could have it burning. He was not angry the week before when she sat late to read a book he had himself given her; what was there in this circumstance so to rouse his spirit?

It was the Bible. His child had been sitting late to read the Bible. She had been so interested in it as quite to forget the lateness of the hour. She had come down after reading it half the night with a face radiant with happi-

ness. The Bible—the book he most dreaded and hated—had done it all. Nor was his ill-humor appeased when on reaching his place of business he learned that the dancing-master he had so triumphantly introduced into his family had decamped, leaving unpaid several large bills which he had allowed him to make. But before noon a summons to hasten to Baltimore on urgent business put other things out of mind, and a few hours later, having taken a hurried leave of his family, he was far away.

“I have observed a great change in Miss Ada of late,” remarked Effie, a few days after, as she was assisting Mrs. Emory in the garden to gather some late autumn flowers.

“Indeed!” said the mother; “in what respect is she changed? In her temper or her manner?”

“In both. She is more patient and persevering, more even-tempered and helpful, and much more thoughtful than she used to be. She often surprises me with the grave, serious remarks she makes upon what she reads, and by the questions she asks.”

“Have you no way of accounting for the

change you notice?" asked Mrs. Emory, stooping to pick a flower.

"None," replied Effie; "I have only noticed the fact without seeking much for an explanation."

"I am glad indeed, Miss Bell, to hear you say you have noticed it, for it gives a sort of confirmation to the hope that has been for several days growing in my own mind. Do you remember the morning after the night that Ada sat late reading her Bible?"

"I do," replied Effie, looking earnestly at Mrs. Emory.

"That night," said the mother, her lip quivering with emotion, "I have reason to believe that the Saviour met my dear child alone in the closet where she was in prayer, and set upon her the seal of a new life, and that the change you see is the development of that life in her."

Effie was much moved. Mrs. Emory noticed her emotion, and said tenderly,

"Dear Miss Bell, this compassionate Saviour receives all that come to him. He is saying to you, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'"

Effie did not attempt to answer; she turned away to hide her emotion, and Mrs. Emory walked slowly to the house. "It is said," thought she, "that 'a little child shall lead them;' who knows but that this little child, by her Christian example, shall yet lead her teacher to believe in Jesus?"

The autumn passed quietly away, the winter came and went, and at length spring returned again, with its pleasant sunshine, and green fields, and opening blossoms. One fine evening, as Effie entered the library where Mrs. Emory and Ada were sitting, she drew a small key from her pocket and handed it to the former, saying, "I found it in the grass where I was searching for some wild strawberry blossoms to analyze, but I think it is so rusty as to be quite useless."

"May I see it, mamma?" said Ada, coming forward. "I think it must belong to this drawer," she continued, applying the key to one near her; "it has been locked a very, very long time, and I have often tried to find the key, so that I might use the drawer for my patterns, but I never could find it."

The rusty key was hard to turn, but at last the bolt yielded, and the long-shut drawer was opened.

"Look, mamma!" exclaimed Ada, glancing down into the drawer; "why, here is our old Bible, its very own self!" and seizing the long-lost treasure, she bore it triumphantly to her mother.

Mrs. Emory took the book without saying a word. At last the mystery was cleared up. The Bible had not been destroyed, after all. From this sin, at least, her husband had been withheld, and she silently thanked God.

"I am very, very glad," she said, "that this book has been found. You wonder, Miss Bell, at our joy at finding this Bible, but to us, old and faded as it is, it is unlike any other. It was the first one in which Ada read the story of the Saviour, and it was from its pages that I learned the way to the blessed cross, at the foot of which, I trust, the Lord took away my burden and my sin."

Mrs. Emory was silent, and Effie felt that she was waiting for some reply from her. "These things," she said, at last, "must invest it with peculiar interest. For myself," she added, after

a pause, "I have never—at least for many years—felt a very deep interest in those matters; perhaps it is because I regard them somewhat differently from many others."

"Do you read your Bible often, dear Miss Bell?" inquired Mrs. Emory.

"Not often," replied Effie, blushing deeply.

"Then you cannot expect," said Mrs. Emory, gently, "to feel the same interest in the great truths it teaches as those who make the Bible their guide and teacher in all things. We are utterly ruined by sin, and God has provided an all-sufficient Saviour who is both able and willing to save sinners. How important, then, that we should search the Scriptures to know our danger and the means God has provided for our escape!"

"In my childhood I was taught a great deal about my sinfulness, but as I have grown older I have not felt it," replied Effie, coldly. "I think while I strive to do right I am doing all I can."

"It is not upon what we can *do*, Miss Bell, that this matter rests, 'for by the works of the law, shall no flesh be justified.' God's requirement is not, *Do and live*, but, *Believe and be saved*. Jesus is the way, and there is but one way. He

is the door, and there is but one door. 'By me,' he says, 'if any man enter, he shall be saved;' and again, 'No man cometh to the Father but by me.'"

Mrs. Emory was silent, and after a few minutes Effie rose, and bidding her and Ada good-night, retired to her own room.

Obedying the impulse to carry her case to God, the mother and child knelt down in earnest prayer that God would lead her to himself.

Effie went to her room with a swelling heart. Her self-righteousness had received a deadly wound; her refuges of lies had begun to crumble; and for the first time she had been made to feel the hopelessness of finding a way to heaven other than the one which God had provided in Christ. The following day her pale face and wearied looks alone told of the struggle of the previous night. Mrs. Emory watched with trembling hope for the answer of prayer, but it was yet far away. Still, could she have seen it, a work had been done. The foundations of Effie's false peace had been shaken—the garments of her self-righteousness had been rent. She could never again sit down satisfied in her sins.

The summer wore away, and the first year of Effie's service was at an end. She was going home. She was again to see her mother and James. She had completed a year of successful labor and real profit. She had read much and wisely, and her character, under Mrs. Emory's kindly Christian influence, had matured into a nobler womanhood. New thoughts had been awakened and new feelings roused within her.

She had had before her, in Mrs. Emory, a faithful, loving Christian, the light of whose blameless life was ever giving her glimpses of the spiritual desolation of her own soul.

Mr. Emory had grown more and more absorbed in mercantile speculations, and consequently gave less and less thought to the changed atmosphere of his own home. For a time the unobtrusive piety of his wife had chafed his spirit. He had felt it a standing rebuke to his worldliness, and his hatred to religion had only been intensified by it. But when he saw her settle down, satisfied, to all appearances, with the church in which she had been reared, and show no disposition to parade her religion by any more public profession, he gradually be-

came indifferent and careless. It was only the strong arm of God that could wrench him away from the idols to which he had given himself up, and turn the current of his affections away from earth and its vanities to higher and more enduring things.

Mrs. Emory and Ada did not lose sight of their faithful Margaret, but every month brought kindly messages, tracts for distribution, money for charities, and tidings of what was going on in the dear home at Beech Grove.

Nor was the basket-maker forgotten. Every week Mrs. Emory and Ada visited him, carrying fruits or flowers, and bringing away lessons of divine things, which his mature Christian experience fitted him so well to give.

"When am I to get that story of the beautiful lady and her two little girls?" inquired Ada at the close of one of these visits.

"It is a sad story," said Philip as his eyes rested mournfully upon the picture. "You do not want it now, my child."

"When will I want it?" asked Ada, smiling.

"Not until some great sorrow comes to you, and you need such strength as the heart may

most easily gain from a recital of the sorrowful experiences of others."

"Ada may need the lesson sooner than any of us think," said Mrs. Emory, thoughtfully. "Her life so far has been a very sunny one, but we cannot doubt there are clouds in the future."

She rose as she ceased speaking, and bidding Philip good-night, the mother and daughter walked slowly homeward.

But their thoughts were widely different. The shadow her mother's words had for a moment cast upon Ada's spirit was soon gone, and she was listening with a glad heart to the singing of birds, and feeling all her pulses quickened by the joyous influences of the hour.

Mrs. Emory was still lingering over the thoughts to which she had just given but a partial expression. She had known for a long time that her health was giving way. She had learned from her confidential physician the cause of the attacks which have been already mentioned, and she knew well that her call from earth would be sudden, perhaps soon. But no one of her family knew that she was passing away from them.

“Could I only stay till Ada is a woman!” she thought as she watched the happy, childlike ways of her little girl; “but my Father knows best. He who has led me by a series of such gracious providences to find my rest in Jesus will not forsake my child—his child now, I trust—but will order all things wisely and well.”

Effie was joyfully received at home, and as she looked round and saw how pleasant the cottage looked, how fresh were the flowers in the window, and, above all, how glad her mother and brother were to see her at home, she sighed to think how quickly a month would glide away, and then she must be parted from her dear ones again.

James had grown tall and strong, and his handsome face glowed with pleasure as he told his sister of the school, of the prize he had finally won—though his brow clouded a little as he declared he believed Harry had missed two or three times on purpose to let the prize come to him—and of the plans he had formed for their mutual enjoyment during the holidays.

“Mr. Boardman is to give me a whole week,

Effie," he exclaimed, his dark eyes dancing with glee, "and you and I are to spend all the time in seeing the sights and taking long walks."

"And what of mother?" said Effie, laying her arm affectionately round her mother's waist.

"Oh, she'll go too! You don't think I leave her out of the plan, do you?" said James, drawing his mother's arm around his own neck; "you see, I'm her little boy yet."

"A big 'little boy,' indeed!" exclaimed Effie, laughing. "Why, mother, he is every bit as tall as you are!"

"Hallo, James!" exclaimed a pleasant voice at the door; "good-evening, Mrs. Bell! Oh, I beg pardon!" he apologized, stepping back on seeing Effie; "I thought you were alone."

"Never mind, Harry," cried James, springing forward and taking his friend by the hand. "Sister Effie, this is my friend Henry Adams, whom I was telling you about."

"I am glad indeed to see you," said Effie, kindly. "James has told me so much about you that I seem to be acquainted with you too."

"Thank you, Miss Bell," said Harry; "I am sure the pleasure is mutual. But I have just

called to say good-bye, as I am to leave by the midnight train for home. Just think, Mrs. Bell!" he continued, turning toward the mother: "if all is well, I shall have seen my mother before this time to-morrow. By the way, James, I have a letter from my father saying I am not to return here to school any more."

"Not going to return any more!" said James, growing very pale; "how is that, Harry?"

"My father wishes me to enter the university in the spring, so he is going to give me a few months' rest. But what is the matter, man? You look sick."

"I did not think of your going away so soon," said James sorrowfully, and turning away he walked to the door to hide his emotion.

"Can James go with me for an hour or two, Mrs. Bell?" said Harry, in a low tone; "I want to talk with him a little."

"Yes," said the mother, wiping away her tears; "he can stay and see you off, if you like."

"Thank you!" said Harry. "Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" she replied, kissing the bright young face that was bent to her own. "God bless you, my son, and have you ever in his holy keeping!"

"Pray for me, dear Mrs. Bell," said Harry, with a quivering lip, "for I am young and weak, and the world is full of snares. Good-bye, Miss Bell," he added, turning to Effie, and a minute after the two boys were walking arm in arm down the street.

"Such words for one so young!" thought Effie as her eyes followed them. "Surely there is something in religion that I have never fathomed;" and folding her arms upon the little gate, she stood long in the soft twilight, musing upon questions she had usually been too glad to avoid, till her mother's voice calling her in from the night air roused her from her reverie.

It was late when James returned. He had, perhaps, spent his last hour with his friend. He had listened, possibly, to his last earnest pleading that he would come to Christ—had seen the train bear him away under the solemn stars, and then flinging himself passionately upon the earth, had wept like one forlorn. But his strength of character soon asserted itself, and he arose and walked slowly home, resolved to profit by his friend's counsel, and seek at once an interest in Christ.



CHAPTER XV.

MRS. EMORY'S BAPTISM.

HAR too soon the holidays sped away, and Effie was once more at her work. Ada entered upon her studies with earnestness, and under her enthusiastic teacher her progress was rapid and satisfactory. Months flew by like a dream, other vacations came and went, flowers bloomed and faded, and came again to gladden the world, and, at length, a bright June morning ushered in another birth-day: Ada was twelve years old.

It was the Lord's Day, and was to be a high day at church. A large number of young girls were to receive "confirmation," and several of them were candidates for baptism. Mrs. Emory and Ada attended the services, but to Ada at least there was a lack of interest, and she returned home thoughtful and sad. Her mother

had earnestly desired that she should be one of the number, but she had pleaded hard for another year, and when her mother had urged for a reason, she had grown uneasy, and finally begged to be excused from giving any. Mrs. Emory was unhappy. She feared very much lest after all Ada's early promise of piety would prove deceitful.

"Ada," she said as they were walking slowly homeward, "are you satisfied that you love Christ?"

"Yes, mamma, I am sure I love Christ."

"You are not ashamed, I trust, to confess your love to him—to own him before the world?"

"No, mamma," replied Ada, earnestly, "but I want to do it in the right way."

"Ada," exclaimed the mother, with surprise, "what do you mean, my child?"

"I hardly know, mamma, what I do mean, but for almost a year I have been trying to find out about those things. The Bible don't say Jesus was baptized when he was a baby; and if he was, mamma, he was baptized over again when he grew to be a man. So I should want to be baptized again too."

"What a strange fancy, Ada! Nobody is baptized the second time, you know."

"But I want to be, mamma. I could not believe anything when I was a baby, and the Bible does not tell of any one being baptized that did not believe. Babies can't believe, mamma."

"You talk strangely, Ada. I did not suppose you were perplexing yourself with such useless questions all this time, my child."

"Please, mamma, I don't see how they can be useless, when they are all in the Bible. Just those that believed were baptized in the time that the Bible tells about, and I think, mamma, that, somehow, what wasn't right then can't be right now."

"What do you mean by 'believed,' Ada?"

"I think it means, believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and loved and obeyed him. I suppose it means to love and obey Christ, to believe on him, doesn't it, mamma?"

"Undoubtedly it does, Ada."

"Well, mamma, babies can't either know or believe. I'm certain I did not; but I do now, and I want to be baptized. But I don't want to be baptized as those thoughtless girls were to-

day. They don't love Christ, mamma—I'm certain they don't. Besides, they were not baptized the way Jesus was."

"Ada!" said the mother, with a start.

"Don't be displeased, mamma. It is not wicked, what I'm saying, is it?"

"I cannot say it's wicked, Ada, but you surprise me very much."

"Please, may I tell you, mamma, how I would like to be baptized?"

"I am not enjoying this talk much, my child; indeed it rather distresses me; still, if you wish, you can tell me."

"I think, mamma, from the way it reads in the Bible, that Jesus went down into the water, and was buried all over in it. It was down into the Jordan that he went, mamma."

"But it does not say he was *buried*, Ada."

"Not just there where it tells about his being baptized, but in other places it tells about being buried in baptism. It speaks in that way in a number of places: I hunted them all out in the big reference Bible in the library."

"Do you really think Christ was buried all over in water when he was baptized, Ada?" inquired the mother, thoughtfully.

"I am sure he was, mamma: buried *means* buried, doesn't it?"

"You have a queer way of putting things, my daughter," said Mrs. Emory, smiling at her child's artlessness. "I must think more about this. There can be but one right way in this matter, and if we can find what that right way is, we will, by God's help, walk in it. We will study our Bibles, each by herself, and by and by we will talk of this again."

Very anxiously did Mrs. Emory search her Bible. She did not talk much with Ada, for she wished each to form her opinion upon God's word alone. But when, after several months' study and prayer, mother and child sat down to compare opinions, they were substantially the same.

Mrs. Emory had, however, gone much farther than Ada. The baptism of believers, and only believers; the one apostolic mode, and that only; the beautiful significance of the ordinance, symbolizing at once the death and resurrection of Christ, as well as the death to sin of the believer, and his resurrection to a new life,—all these had been opened up to her comprehension and her

faith. Thenceforth the longing of both mother and child was to follow Christ.

"My husband may never consent to this," thought Mrs. Emory, "but I will first put the matter into God's hands, and then into his. If this is the way of duty, God will surely guide my feet into it."

"Have you a little leisure to talk with me to-night, George?" said Mrs. Emory to her husband, who had returned earlier than usual; "I have a matter of great importance to lay before you."

"I hope, Julia, it is not that old topic to which I long ago refused to listen?" said Mr. Emory, nervously.

"It is a matter which pertains solely to Ada and myself, George. We both desire Christian baptism, and want your consent to our receiving it."

Mr. Emory knew well what his wife meant. In his father's house there had been but one mode recognized, and he had himself no question so far as the Bible might be considered an authority concerning that mode. But he had flattered himself that his wife would never come

to question the usage of the church in which she had been reared, though he had long dreaded lest it might be otherwise, for he had felt certain what the result would be should she ever carry her acuteness and discernment into an investigation of the subject. But the question was at last upon him, and he must face it.

"How has this come about, Julia?" he inquired, with affected carelessness. "Who has been putting notions into your head now?"

"Ada first set me thinking," replied Mrs. Emory. "I suppose I should never have questioned the practice of my own church in this particular had not her simple-hearted piety led her to a clearer understanding of the truth than I had attained. Since then I have made it my business to ascertain what my Bible teaches, and the result you know."

Mr. Emory burst into a loud laugh. "Really, Julia," he exclaimed, "you boast of profound teachers. When you first turned religious, it was Ada gave you a start, and now it is Ada again. I wonder if I had not better sit down at the feet of our precious young daughter and take lessons too?"

"I am not the first, George," said Mrs.

Emory, gravely, "whom God has led by the hand of a little child, and I thank him with all my heart for such a precious teacher."

Mr. Emory had grown grave too. The laugh was only in sound: at heart he was deeply moved.

"I must go out a while," he said, glancing at his watch. "At the end of a month, if you wish, I will answer you. In the mean time, I expect you to get the better of to-night's folly;" and hastily snatching up his hat, he left the house. It was late when he returned, and he felt relieved to find the family all in bed. The struggle through which he had passed had been severe; he was glad there was no one to mark its traces.

A feeling of utter desolation had taken possession of his heart. His wife and child were receding from him farther and farther, and he was being left in the world more and more alone. But he had resolved, whatever might be his wife's course, he would oppose her no more. She might do as she pleased; she had a mind and conscience of her own; if she could not be satisfied with his way, let her choose her own; he would not lower his self-respect by

any more contention, since so far he had had the mortification of having it all to himself.

At first he resolved to feign business that should take him from home at the time of her baptism, but his pride revolted from such a course as weak and unmanly; it was like running away from something he had not the courage to face. Besides, should he allow strangers to be her assistants; her servants, her companions; those with whom he felt no sympathy, her attendants? No; come what would, he would stand by her in this public profession, but she must expect no more; she must never take advantage from it to urge her religion upon him.

The month passed away, and during all that time neither husband nor wife had referred to the subject again.

"Julia," said Mr. Emory, a few days after the expiration of the time, "I have waited several days for you to speak of the matter I deferred for a month's consideration, but as you have not done so, I conclude you have given it up, and I am very glad."

"It has not been because I was less anxious

in regard to the matter, George, but I hoped you would speak to me about it."

"And do you still wish to make a public exhibition of yourself?"

"I still wish to follow Christ," replied Mrs. Emory, without seeming to notice her husband's sneer.

"And does my wife really expect me to consent to such a course?"

"I certainly hope you will, George. I do not see why you should not."

"But suppose I do not, Julia, what then?"

"I should pray very earnestly that God would open my way, so that I could obey him without disobeying my husband."

"But suppose, after all, I would never consent?"

"God has abundant means by which to answer the prayers of his people."

"I see, Julia, the plan you have: it is to oppose me to One who you feel sure would prove too strong for me. But suppose God would not answer that prayer, but should see fit to try you by leaving you to fight it out with me alone, what then? Tell me what you would do in such a case."

"Perhaps you will first tell me what you would do in such a case, George. You seem to have thought pretty closely upon the question."

"That is not a fair way of disposing of such a matter, Julia. The case is yours, and not mine, and you are expected to meet it on your conscience."

"It may not be 'fair,' George, but it certainly would be very kind in you to tell me how you think you would act if, after mature thought, you conscientiously believed God required a particular duty of you. I fancy, if you would tell me your honest conviction, you would say the very thing you would most dislike to hear me say."

"You are quite right, Julia," said Mr. Emory, seriously. "I should indeed dislike to hear you say: 'I should obey God rather than you;' yet if you are thoroughly in earnest, as I know you are, it would be the only proper course open to you in such a case. You are quite free, Julia, so far as I am concerned, to do what you feel to be right."

"Thank you, George," replied Mrs. Emory, tears filling her eyes at this unexpected kindness; "and Ada?"

"Ada must wait till she is older. Her opinions must necessarily be very immature. She may modify them very much by the time she is a woman."

"Her opinions and convictions are very strong," pleaded the mother.

"It may be so, Julia, but if her opinions and convictions, and religion too, are worth anything, they will bear a little trial. True gold will stand fire, you know. Ada must wait."

Mrs. Emory was silent. She saw her husband was resolute, and though deeply disappointed, she did not urge her request. "He has already conceded much," thought she—"far more than I dared to hope for. God may have some wise design in this. Ada's waiting may be blessed to her father in ways we do not dream of."

The next day Mrs. Emory waited upon Mr. Edwards, the pastor of the church of which she wished to become a member, and the following Saturday was appointed as the day for her to appear before the church.

Great was the rejoicing among those faithful Christians as Mrs. Emory took her place among them, and bowed heads and tearful eyes testified how deeply all hearts were touched by her sim-

ple recital of the way by which God had led her to a knowledge of the truth.

The following day at sunset was the time appointed for her baptism, and followed by the blessing and benediction of many hearts, Mrs. Emory returned home.

We need not enter into a description of the baptism. The administration of the ordinance in the Scriptural mode is now so frequent in Christian lands that there are comparatively few who have not witnessed it and felt the sacred solemnity of such a scene.

That day, for the first time for many years, Mr. Emory attended public worship with his wife, and listened with her to the preaching of the gospel. When she came forward in her baptismal robes, it was on his arm she leaned, and his hand was first to grasp her own as she stepped on shore. As he stood at the water's edge during the solemn ceremony, with his young daughter and her governess at his side, and the golden beams of the setting sun falling full upon his bared head, many prayers went up in silence to God that they might soon be all brought to follow the example of her who, in

her robes of emblematic white, was bowing so meekly to Christ's own ordinance.

One who had watched Mr. Emory closely might have seen in his compressed lips and the swelling veins of his forehead some indication of the struggle that was passing within, while Ada's face, all radiant with tearful joy, told its own story of a peace whose source is divine.

Effie was very pale. It was the first time she had ever witnessed such a scene, and her whole nature was stirred to its depths. God's Spirit, through his own ordinance, was making upon her heart ineffaceable impressions. She felt, as she had never felt before, the divine excellence of Christianity, and for the first time for many years was conscious of her own utter unworthiness, and of a longing to become a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus.

The solemn burial of the believer with Christ was ended; the benediction was pronounced, and in the hush of that sacred twilight the large crowd retired. Mr. Emory helped his wife, with Ada and Effie, to the carriage, and taking the reins, drove rapidly to his own door. Lifting his wife from the carriage, he walked with her to her room. Opening the door, he paused for a

moment upon the threshold to press a silent kiss upon her lips, and then hastening to the library, he locked the door and remained alone during most of the night. The following morning, when he again joined his family, his pale face and subdued manner alone revealed what he had suffered. The history of that night was long untold.

Effie, too, as she had often done before, hid away in the silent chambers of her own heart the solemn impressions of that day. For her it needed that the rock should be smitten before the sweet waters of contrition might flow, and the trial was preparing.





CHAPTER XVI.

JAMES BELL'S PROMISE.

IN haste,'” said Mrs. Emory, glancing at the outside of a letter she held in her hand. “I hope there is nothing unpleasant. Here, Ada, take this letter to Miss Bell.”

Ada took the letter from her mother's hand, and hastening to her teacher's room, tapped gently at the door.

“Here is a letter, Miss Bell,” she said as Effie opened the door. “See, it says, ‘In haste.’”

Effie tore open the letter. It ran thus :

“DEAR EFFIE: Come home quickly, and lose no time. Mother is very ill.

“JAMES.”

Effie was deadly pale. Her head grew dizzy,

and she leaned upon a chair for support. "Dear Miss Bell, can I help you any?" cried Ada, who, after delivering the letter, had lingered near, fearful of evil tidings.

"Take this to your mother," said Effie, handing her the letter, and then, fully herself again, she hastily folded a few articles of clothing, crushed them into a small traveling-bag, and by the time Mrs. Emory appeared at the door her preparations were nearly complete.

Mrs. Emory wasted no time in useless words. "You have just half an hour till train-time," she said, looking at her watch; "here is my purse: use it freely, if you have need, and if you require more let me know at once. Not a word!" she added, as Effie was about to remonstrate; "no one knows how pressing your need may be, and besides, there is no call for ceremony between friends."

"I trust you may find your mother better," said Mrs. Emory as she walked with Effie to the gate, where John was waiting to accompany her to the train; "but if not, in every trial, look up. God is near us at all times, and remember, he does all things well."

Oh, how slowly, to Effie's impatient heart, the swift train seemed to move! How the moments lagged at the different stations as the rapid changes were made! But at last the train swept proudly into the last station, and stepping upon the platform, Effie threw herself into a conveyance, and soon found herself at her mother's door. The door was shut, the white muslin curtains were close drawn, and the whole air seemed hushed to an unnatural silence. She raised the latch softly, and pushing the door gently open, stepped within.

James was sitting at a table as his sister entered, but springing forward, he grasped her hand and said in a whisper, "You have come none too soon, Effie. Mother is still alive, but the doctor says she will not live many hours."

Effie threw off her bonnet and cloak, and without saying a word, went softly to her mother's bedside. Jenny Thompson was sitting at the foot of the bed, a hired nurse was passing in and out, and with noiseless steps moving about the room, while on the couch, wasted and pale, lay the dying mother. James had followed his sister into the room, and for a few minutes both stood in sorrowful silence by the bed. Sudden-

ly, as if conscious of the presence of her children, the dying woman opened her eyes.

"Thank God you are here at last!" she whispered as Effie took the thin hand in both her own. "I am going very soon, my child, but God has heard my prayer and permitted me to wait until you came."

"Oh, mother," cried Effie, in uncontrollable grief, "you will not die! You will stay with us now, and I will nurse you and take care of you, and never, never leave you again!"

"Hush, my darling," said the mother; "God has called me, and I must go. Lift me up, Jenny," she said, glancing at her cousin; "I must speak a few words to my children, and then I shall be ready. Effie," she said, when her pillows were adjusted and she had rested a little, "take my place to your brother; be instead of a mother to him when I am gone; and you, James, be true to your sister, and make her your friend and adviser. You two will soon be alone, so you must stand by each other. I thought to see you both Christians before I died—you, Effie, so much like your father, I expected would have been walking in his steps long ago, but you are yet in your unbelief.

Will you not, my daughter, make it your first business to seek the Lord?"

"I will, mother," cried Effie, with passionate tears, and she meant what she said. "Oh, pray for me once more, mother, if it be but one word!"

The pale eyelids closed and the lips moved, but there was no sound. "I have prayed for you, Effie," she said, at length, opening her eyes; "pray for yourself, and God will hear. Where is James?" she asked, quickly.

"Here, mother," said James, pressing forward; "do you not see me?"

"Yes, now I do, my son. You, too, are not a Christian, though I thought long ago you were very near the kingdom of heaven; how much longer, my son, are you going to wait?"

"I have not meant to wait so long as this, mother. I have sought often and often, but have not found."

"That shows that you have not sought aright or that you have not been in earnest, my son, for God has said, 'Those that seek me early shall find me.' It's not *may*, but *shall*. Just believe God, my son, trust him with your whole heart, and do not forget that unbelief makes

God a liar, and that is one of the most grievous of sins."

For a while she was silent, and her children fancied she slept, but as if a sudden thought had restored her to full strength, she opened her eyes wide and called for her son.

"I am here," cried James; "what is it, mother?"

"A strange thought came to me," said the mother, slowly, "yet I don't know how, for I believed I had done with this world. But I have come back just to ask you to promise me never to taste of intoxicating drinks as a beverage."

"Why, mother," exclaimed James, turning very red, "there is surely no need of such a promise."

"You don't know the need," said the dying woman, earnestly. "When your father was like you, he too thought there was no need, but drinking companions gathered around him and tempted him, and he fell. Your own father, James, was for six long years a drunkard, and but for the grace of God he would have died a drunkard. Will you promise me, before I leave you, never to drink even wine as a beverage?"

"There is surely no need, mother," said the boy, much distressed, "that I should bind myself in such a solemn way. I want my freedom. What is a man in this world, mother, if he is not free?"

"Would you be free," cried the mother, her dark eyes flashing with unnatural brightness, "to make yourself a driveling, drunken idiot; to cast your manhood down to the gutter; to plunge yourself into hell? God save you, my boy, from such freedom!"

"But, mother," cried James, passionately, "I need no such pledge to keep me!"

"Yes, you do!" she replied, sinking feebly back upon her pillow, "and more, far more, my son! You need God's help, without which a promise is but a feeble thing, after all. Oh, my son, will you not promise me this before I go?"

"Shame on you, James!" cried Effie, indignantly, as she saw her brother still hesitate—"shame on you, to vex your mother in her dying moment! I would give my life to spare her one pang!"

"I love my mother as well as you do!" cried James, turning almost fiercely toward his sister,

"Mother," he added, bursting into tears and grasping her hand in both his, "will nothing else do?"

"Nothing else," replied the mother, feebly, with great effort.

"Then I promise, mother," he exclaimed, lifting himself up to his full height, "that, by God's help, I will do as you request."

"My God, I thank thee!" whispered the dying woman, faintly; "oh, keep my only son from the tempter's snare."

"Kiss me, my children," she said, after a little pause; "kiss me, dear Cousin Jenny; you have been a good friend to me;" and they all came round her and kissed her for the last time. In a little while Catharine Bell had passed within the veil, but there lingered on her countenance no trace of that last struggle. A smile of sweet and saintly peace rested there, telling that the conflict had ended in victory, the weariness in rest.

Effie's grief was deep and passionate, shaking her soul to its depths. For years her strong love to her mother had been her chief incentive to study and toil. Her great governing motive had been to please her mother; whatever end

she sought to accomplish had comprehended, in some way, her mother's comfort and ease. But now they were all gone; motive and aim were swept away at a stroke; earthly hope was lost; heavenly hope she had never sought; and her soul was desolate beyond expression.

James did not moan nor weep except when he saw the coffin-lid fastened down over the beloved form. Though but fifteen years of age, James had a strength of character which years of ordinary experience could hardly have given him. His hesitancy to comply with her request had not risen from any lack of love for his mother, but from deep-settled and, as he thought, valid objections. Successful in school and in business, handsome and agreeable, he had gradually drawn round him a circle of admiring youths—several of them older than himself—by whom he was petted and caressed, and by whom he was being rapidly led on to ruin. Harry Adams had been a faithful and true friend, and by him James had been more than once “almost persuaded to be a Christian.” But deprived of his friend's society, and thrown more and more into the company of a very different class of associates, he had allowed himself to be gradually led on, until the

habit of drinking was already formed, and with all the enthusiasm of his ardent nature he had adopted their false theories of manliness and personal liberty. Yet he had carefully concealed not only his habits, but his sentiments, from his mother, who, never dreaming of his danger, was rejoicing in the belief that he was free from the vices of the great city, and even making progress in the knowledge of divine things.

What was it, then, that quickened that mother's dying sense to a consciousness of her boy's danger, and brought her back from the gates of death to interpose the might of a solemn pledge between him and a peril of which she had no knowledge?

Ah, there are mysterious links in the chain of God's providences which our finite wisdom can never discern, and subtle influences by which to move the human soul which we, in our earthly blindness, may never trace.

At length the funeral was over, the furniture sold, the cottage given up, and Effie, almost broken-hearted, returned to Beech Grove. James gratefully accepted the kind offer of Mr. Boardman to reside altogether in his family and carry

on his studies as formerly, giving his leisure time to the business of his employer, to whom he was daily becoming more and more useful. It had been arranged between the brother and sister that James should go on in this way until he was fitted for the university, and Effie secretly resolved to hoard all her earnings, in order that when that day arrived money should not be lacking for carrying him through.

Mrs. Emory and Ada were unremitting in their attempts to cheer the loneliness and soothe the sorrows of the mourner, and many were the urgent appeals with which the former besought her to carry all her care to Christ, who has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

"The truth is," said Effie, "I am endeavoring to do this, but I cannot feel that God is willing to receive me, and often, were it not for the promise I made my mother, I think I should give up the struggle."

"Thank God, then, that your promise is in the way!" said Mrs. Emory. "But do you not forget that not only have you promised to go to God, but God has promised to come to you?"

How often, in his blessed word, have you his invitations, coupled with the sure promise that you shall not seek his face in vain? Do you not believe this, dear Miss Bell?"

"I believe," said Effie, solemnly, "that God cannot lie, that his promises are faithful and sure, but there is, at the same time, something in myself that practically denies it. I do not accept it. I do not rest upon it. Here is the struggle. I cannot see how I am to be saved—how God can say to one who has for years disobeyed him as I have, 'Though your sins be scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' I cannot understand how it is that my nature can be so transformed that I shall hate what I now love, and love what I now hate."

"But, dear Miss Bell, it is not necessary that you should see how all these things can be! Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, was in the same trouble, and he asked the Saviour, 'How can these things be?' but Jesus did not see fit to tell him. He says these things are so, and it is our business to believe it, for we know it is asserted by One who cannot lie. What he has said he will do."

"I know," said Effie, sadly; "I know all these things; my head is well enough taught—perhaps too well: it is my heart that will not yield. I believe I have reached that point where I am willing to give up all for Christ—my pride, my worldly ambition, myself, and all my powers—yet I am not accepted. Tell me, dear Mrs. Emory, what I yet lack."

"You do not," replied Mrs. Emory, "yet believe in Jesus as an all-sufficient Saviour. You are trusting in your own willingness, your own earnestness, your own self-renunciation, or something else, I cannot tell what; but one thing is certain—you are not trusting in Christ, for if you were, you would certainly find rest for your soul. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.' It is at the foot of the cross, in sight of Jesus, the great Sacrifice for your sins, that you must find life if you find it at all. It is Jesus—Jesus in his agony, Jesus dying on the cross, and dying, too, as an atonement for your sin—to whom you must look as your only refuge and hope if you are ever saved."

“What is the matter with Miss Bell?” inquired Mr. Emory not very long after Effie’s return. “It must be something besides mere grief for her mother that is weighing upon her. Perhaps, Julia, she is needing money. You should ask her.”

“It is nothing of that nature, George.”

“What is it, then?”

“She is bearing the burden of her sins, George,” said Mrs. Emory, sorrowfully, “because she has not strength to cast it upon Jesus.”

Mr. Emory changed countenance, but remained silent. He had unexpectedly approached a subject which more than all others he wished to avoid. But his thoughts would not be stilled; a voice seemed to cry in his ears, “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”



CHAPTER XVII.

THE HAPPY LORD'S DAY EVENING.



WEEKS passed, and still Effie was under the cloud; no light yet shone in upon the gloom of her troubled spirit.

It was the Lord's Day. She had attended worship with Mrs. Emory and Ada in the afternoon, and it had seemed to her that every word of the sermon was intended for her, yet it had brought no comfort. The preacher's theme—the pure in heart and the promise given them—had only seemed to reveal to her more and more her own impurity and unfitness for the exalted privilege of which she had heard. Weary and heartsick, as the day was drawing to its close she retired to the library, and casting herself upon a sofa, sought a little rest from her distracting thoughts. The rays of the setting sun streamed into the room, lighting up volume after volume over whose pages she had lingered

with increasing satisfaction, but not one of them at that hour seemed to possess a single charm.

At length her eye rested upon a drawer under a bookcase near her, and for the first time for many months she remembered the rusty key, the long-shut drawer, the old Bible, and all the conversation of that evening. Her first impulse was to rise and see if the book was still in its place, but she felt weary, and closing her eyes, she tried to recall what she had that day been reading in her own Bible. But nothing came back to her that brought comfort. Then she slowly recalled the sermon to which she had been listening, but she shuddered as she thought of seeing God. "What would he be to me," thought Effie, "but a consuming fire? I could not look on him. I could not even behold his faintest glory without utter destruction, for oh, I have no 'daysman' between him and me that can lay his hand upon both of us!" and tears, which she seldom permitted to flow, trickled slowly down her face.

She rose mechanically, and scarce heeding what she did, opened the drawer. She lifted the book from its place and bore it to a window. It opened, as if of itself, to the fifty-third chap-

ter of Isaiah, but one worn page showed that human hands had been there before, and human eyes lingered lovingly upon that sorrowful picture. Effie read. At first it was with a dreamy half consciousness of whom the prophet spoke, but slowly the Saviour of the world seemed revealed in the words she read, and she seemed to see him "oppressed and afflicted, led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers," opening not his mouth. Again and again she went back to those pathetic words: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Effie clasped the book in her arms, and sinking upon her knees, offered to God the sacrifice

of a broken and contrite heart. Jesus, none but Jesus, was the burden of her cry, and the Saviour, all pitiful, sorrowing and suffering, wounded for her transgressions, bruised for her iniquities, bearing in his head, and hands, and feet, and in the stripes and wounds that marked his sacred flesh, the chastisement of her peace and the means of her healing, was there revealed to the eye of faith. She had cast herself before God a broken-hearted penitent: she rose a rejoicing believer.

Mrs. Emory and Ada were sitting in the twilight of that Lord's Day evening talking of the precious truths to which they had that day listened, and Ada's young heart was glowing with delight as her mother dwelt with unwonted interest upon the glorious prospects revealed to the saint by those sacred beatitudes of our Lord, from which the text of the afternoon had been chosen, when a quick rap at the door startled them from their quiet converse, and without waiting for a response, Effie entered, and in an instant was kneeling at Mrs. Emory's side and clasping her with loving arms.

"Oh, Mrs. Emory," she exclaimed, in a broken

voice, "I have found Jesus! I have found my Saviour! I see and know and understand it all now; and oh, how is it that I have waited and groped so long when the way is so easy?"

Ada had waited for only the first sentence to throw herself upon the neck of her beloved teacher, and there in the sweet twilight they three knelt together before God to offer to him the incense of loving and grateful hearts.

"Oh, mother, dear mother," exclaimed Effie as they rose from their knees, "you have not died in vain! Oh, if you were only here! But no, I do not wish it! I would not recall you even for an hour from your nearer view of our blessed Lord! You will not come to me, but I shall go to you, thank God! not in the deceitful paths of my own choosing, but by the way of the blessed cross, in the narrow path my Redeemer has trodden before."

Mr. Emory was not slow to notice the joyful change in Effie, and secretly he was glad. From the day he ruled his spirit to acquiescence in the baptism of his wife a great change in his feelings had been gradually taking place. He was not conscious of any intention to become a

Christian, but he was feeling more and more the insecurity of his position and a craving for some more assured rest than he had yet found. One after another he had turned over in his mind—not, indeed, for the first time—the great systems of infidelity, but each in turn had been dismissed, not now, as on former occasions, that he might sink into more settled indifference to all things spiritual, but because, while he before found them difficult, he now found them unsatisfying.

Hence he turned the more anxiously to the Christian religion, to see if it gave evidence of anything really stable and satisfying. He had been anxiously but silently watching the progress of the struggle that had been going on in Effie, and a feeling approaching to disappointment had come over him as he saw her, week after week, sinking into deeper and deeper gloom.

But when he beheld her face all radiant with the joy of a new-found peace, he knew that the crisis was past, and secretly he rejoiced.

“We will see how it lasts,” thought Mr. Emory. “It seems to be standing the test well with Ada, so far as I can judge, and her mother is pure gold, if there is any. And John, too,

poor fellow! is doing first rate. But here is a new subject, and a very different one, too, by the way. But what do I care, after all? True or false, I have no time for it yet, and by the time I am ready I shall have had ample opportunity to study both its excellences and its defects."

James Bell had not dreamt of the utter loneliness that awaited him till his sister had gone, and he found himself in the busy city alone. He watched the train as it glided swiftly from view beneath the blue, wintry sky, and then, with a dreary sinking of heart, he walked slowly away to the now desolate cottage that had so lately been his home. He still had the keys in his possession, and unlocking the house, he entered the little front parlor, and carefully locked the door again. He walked slowly up the narrow stairs, his footsteps sending a hollow echo through the house and causing a shudder, almost like fear, to run through his frame.

He paused a moment in his sister's room, and then, after visiting his own for a little while, descended to the kitchen and the laundry. But there everything reminded him of his mother, and for a moment he almost expected to hear

her cheerful voice again in those familiar places ; but the dreary silence turned his heart sick, and he hastened away to visit, last of all, the room where his mother died. Locking the door behind him, he cast himself down upon the floor in that part of the room where his mother's dying bed had stood, and yielding to the homesick anguish that wrung his young heart, wept as though that heart would break.

At length, wearied out with the excess of his emotions, he fell asleep, and did not waken until the afternoon sun was pouring its slant beams through the uncurtained windows upon his head. He rose with a sick feeling of utter bereavement, and as he looked round upon the desolate apartment, once joyful with the presence of his almost idolized mother, his tears burst forth afresh, and kneeling, he prayed for strength and protection, and for deliverance from the temptations which he knew he should soon be forced to meet.

Mr. Boardman saw, when James returned at evening, by his swollen eyes and pale face, that he had given up the day to grief, and having requested his wife to be very tender of the motherless boy, dismissed him at an early hour that he might go to rest.

James rose in the morning refreshed and strengthened. The great struggle was past, and he felt prepared to enter with something like alacrity upon his studies and his work.

His classmates and companions hailed his return with joy. But when they noticed his dejected manner and sorrowful shrinking from their amusements, even the most thoughtless forbore to urge him, and for a while he was kindly left to the indulgence of his grief. But by degrees he began to mingle in their sports, and before the winter was past he was able to join them again with his wonted alacrity.

At length the spring returned. Earth smiled again in her robes of soft green, the sky put on its mildest azure, and the white clouds floated dreamily once more through the fresh, warm air. There was to be a holiday for the school, and a few of James' companions had resolved to spend the day in the country. It was arranged that they should take their dinners, and give up the day to ball-play and other games. Each was to bring his own basket, and those who could not procure a bottle of spirits at home were to purchase it privately.

James was of course invited, but as he was known to be poor, the plan for dinner was kept from him, and the others agreed to provide his share. At first he hesitated, and was stammering out a refusal, when one who had done more than all others to lead him into a habit of drink—the son of a rich merchant in the city—interrupted him with, “Of course you will, James Bell. We have waited long enough for you to get to be one of us again, and you will have to go.” Others joined in the appeal, and soon James had consented—not, however, without a severe struggle with himself—to make one of the party.

“Oh, I wish I was out of this city,” he thought as he turned away; “how am I ever to keep my pledge to my mother among these boys, not one of whom but will both drink himself and ridicule me if I refuse?”

James’ great weakness of character, and one of which he was deeply conscious, was a nervous shrinking from ridicule. While opposition would rouse him to a sturdy resistance, ridicule would speedily bear down his best resolutions, and he would yield often when he knew that he was not only doing wrong, but giving others a fatal

advantage over him. In this way he had often compromised his sense of right and weakened the power of conscience, thus laying himself open more and more to the assaults of temptation. His companions had not failed to discover this weakness, and the less scrupulous were not slow in taking advantage of it. Thus, though with frequent and painful checks of conscience, he had gone on, until his mother's dying words interposed the first efficient barrier to his downward progress. How feeble those words and the promise they extorted may seem to one who knows the power of evil over the heart of a proud and gifted boy like James, yet how strong to one who remembers the potency of a dying mother's prayer!

"I shall keep my pledge, though," thought James as he hurried on. "I am not to be laughed out of that, as I have often been laughed out of my resolutions in former times;" and looking up to heaven, he mentally asked for help to adhere to his resolution. James was not a Christian, but he was by his very nature thoughtful and earnest. Prayer had been a habit of his life, first learned at his mother's knee, and afterward enforced by both precept and example,

and he seldom formed a resolution or entered upon a pursuit without it. He felt that the trial before him—for he knew very well there would be ardent spirits provided by some of the boys—would be hard for him, with his already strong appetite for drink, to meet and resist. He believed he should be laughed at and despised when he came to refuse to drink with them, but a part of the struggle had been met at his mother's dying bed: the rest he hoped would be comparatively easy.

The morning of the anticipated day was fresh and bright. James was early at his work, and some time before the hour for starting had arrived his morning duties were carefully done, and an hour had been gained for an extra job of writing which Mr. Boardman had given him to do.

As he was leaving the house to join his companions at the place agreed upon for setting out, a messenger handed him a letter. He saw at a glance it was from his sister, and remembering there were yet a few minutes to spare, he turned back, and seating himself in a little recess near a window, opened the letter.

It was a long one, in which Effie told him all the history of her religious experience, going back to the early teachings of their father, tracing the various influences that had left a permanent effect upon her conscience and her heart, and lingering with loving interest over the impressions renewed at her mother's death-bed. Then she carefully recorded the struggle which pride and sin and unbelief had cost her, until the great crisis of her life was past and she had come to Jesus and found her rest in him.

The letter ended with a solemn caution to her brother to avoid the great mistake of her life—that of trusting to morality to recommend her to God's favor and procure salvation, which was to be found alone in the blood of Jesus. She besought him to make religion his first concern, and to shun, as he would utter ruin, the temptations to vice that must constantly assail him in a great city.

James read the letter with a choking sense of grief which he did not fully comprehend. He was not sorry his sister had become a Christian, but there came with the knowledge of her conversion an added sense of loneliness. Had she

not left him even more utterly alone than before? Heaven and hell were not more widely sundered than were he and his sister. Hers was now the narrow way that leads to life, his the broad way that leads to eternal ruin. He seemed suddenly to be conscious that, from that hour, her course tended ever upward and upward still, to the bright home his parents had reached, and that his would tend downward more and more till it would end in eternal woe.





CHAPTER XVIII.

TEMPTATION RESISTED.

JAMES folded the letter hastily, and thrusting it into his pocket, set out to join his companions. They were already waiting, and several of them rallied him on his serious face.

“You look as though you were going to execution,” said one. “Let me get the measure of your face,” cried another, but the others forbore to rally him, and hastened their preparations in order to give him a chance to recover from the jests of their comrades.

When James saw the well-filled baskets, he refused to go unless permitted to go back and procure his own share, but his objections were finally overruled, and accepting permission to assist in carrying the provisions, he set out with the rest.

A brisk walk of a little more than an hour

brought them to the place agreed upon, and carefully stowing away their baskets under a spreading tree, they gave themselves up to the sports of the morning.

"Come, boys," exclaimed one of the company as the day grew warm and the sun approached the zenith, "I am getting hungry; let's have our dinners;" and acting upon the suggestion, all, with the exception of James, started for their baskets.

"Come on, Jimmy Bell," cried one of them, looking over his shoulder, then halting, he waited for James to come up. By the time they reached the great tree where the baskets had been deposited, a large cloth, which one of the boys had brought, was laid, several of the baskets were already emptied, and soon all were gathered round the table. Dinner passed off with much merriment and cordiality, until one of the boys, drawing a cork-screw from his pocket, opened a bottle, and pouring some of its contents into a glass, offered it to the one next to him. Then another and another bottle was opened, and soon the liquor was circulating freely.

"Here, James Bell," said one of the boys,

"try a glass of mine; it's the real stuff, and none of your make-believe."

"No, thank you," said James; "I will not have any to-day."

"Not have any?" exclaimed the boy; "why, what has come to pass? Look here, boys! here's James Bell refusing to drink!"

"Pshaw, nonsense! have some, James," cried several voices, and already several glasses were passed, when James again replied:

"No, no, boys! I thank you all, but I shall not take any to-day."

"To be sure you will!" cried Fred Brown, a boy at his side; "you don't mean anything of the kind!"

"Yes, I do, indeed," replied James, rising to his feet. "I mean just what I say. You are all very kind, but—"

"But—but," mimicked Fred, with a titter. "Parson Bell, you are getting too old altogether. We must warm up your blood a little. Here, have some of my sherry; it will do you good;" and he was pressing forward, when James stepped back, and addressing the company, said firmly:

"Boys, have the goodness, all of you, not to

urge me any farther, for indeed I will not take it."

"“Will not!” exclaimed Fred Brown, who was somewhat of a bully, stepping forward; “but you’ll have to! I’ll hold him, boys, if anybody will pour it down his throat!”

“No one shall pour it down my throat, or hold me either!” exclaimed James, stepping to one side and planting himself firmly against the great tree under which the empty baskets were piled; “and what is more, I shall not drink a drop to-day.”

“And why not, Jim?” exclaimed a well-bred boy who had been James’ friend; “you know you used to think as we did about these things.”

“Because,” replied James, “I am under pledge to—to—” and here his utterance failed; he could not say, “to my mother,” before those mocking faces that were at that instant turned toward him.

“Under pledge!” cried several voices in the same instant. “He’s signed the pledge!” “We’ll have no pledge-fellows!” “Down with him!” “Cure him of his pledge!” and three or four, headed by Fred Brown, rushed toward him.

“Boys,” said James, his eyes flashing, “you

may *say* what you please, but you must not touch me!"

"Not touch you, indeed, you poor sneak!" shouted Fred Brown, enraged at what he took for a defiance, and rushing forward, he caught him by the wrists, intending to jerk him off his feet.

But James, though a year younger than his assailant, was more than his match in agility, and wrenching his hands quickly from the grasp of the bully, he caught him by the collar of his coat and hurled him violently to the ground.

"Now keep off, all of you!" he said to the others, who, surprised at the sudden discomfiture of their leader, were cowering back.

"Boys," he continued, turning to the others, "I did not come here either to be urged or bullied into drinking. I declined it at first in a proper manner; then I refused it; and because I was resolute in my refusal, you, all of you, sat by and saw these fellows set upon me to force me to it. You are not the kind of boys I thought you were, and now I'm going home. I should only be in the way after what has passed;" and turning, he walked slowly away.

"Come back! Come back!" cried several

voices, "and you shall be let alone," but James did not look back or reply. As soon as he was out of sight of the boys he walked rapidly on, and reached home early in the afternoon.

"You are home early, James," said Mr. Boardman. "Your games were not over, were they?"

"Mine were," said James, bitterly, and seating himself alone with his employer, he frankly told him the whole truth—told him of the principles he had imbibed and the habits he had formed, of his mother's dying appeal and his unwilling pledge, and of the trial he had just passed through.

"And now, sir," he said, when he had finished, "you see the position I am in. Henceforth I shall be shunned and despised by all my associates. What am I to do?"

"To do, my boy?" said Mr. Boardman; "why, just act like the man you have shown yourself to-day, that's all. Treat the boys as if nothing had occurred, and if you stand firm by what you have to-day professed, they will honor you even more than before. You have escaped a fearful snare, my boy," continued Mr. Boardman, "but your adherence to the course to which you are

now openly committed will be a life-long triumph, and if, under God, you are enabled to do so, your dear mother will not have died in vain. If all you have just told me is true, James, that dying appeal was made none too soon."

"I am sure, sir," said James, with a quivering lip, "I did not think such an appeal was needed, but I fear it was, after all. My poor mother," he added, sorrowfully, "had the fullest confidence in me, while for almost two years I was cruelly deceiving her."

"Living a lie, James," said Mr. Boardman, impressively.

"I had not thought of that, sir," replied the boy, looking earnestly at his friend.

"A lie, James," continued Mr. Boardman, "daily repeated for almost two years, to both your mother and me."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed James, his face crimson with shame and remorse, "is there no other name for it? That sounds very harsh."

"So it does, my son," said Mr. Boardman, taking his hand kindly, "but God's law is exceedingly broad. It reaches beyond mere words, down deep into the heart, and searches

all the intentions. A lie, whether spoken, looked, or acted, is a lie still in God's sight. The intent to deceive is all that is needed in any case: where that is found the guilt of falsehood is found, and we must be judged accordingly.

"But do not think, dear boy," said Mr. Boardman, tears springing to his eyes as he watched the effect his words were producing, "that I say this either to blame or reproach you: I bless God that he has turned your feet out of this fatal course; but I am taking this opportunity to show you the insidious character of sin.

"Oh, my son, watch well the heart, for sin has corrupted it through and through, and only God can cleanse it of its defilement. May to-day's lesson lead you to seek for such cleansing, and that at once!"

James bowed his thanks, and as it was still early retired for a while to his own room. He was greatly humbled and distressed, and sitting down, he buried his hot face in his hands. He was learning his first bitter lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the breadth and purity of God's law. For the first time in his life he felt afraid to pray. Never before had he

realized the awful distance between himself and God, and he shrank with confusion and terror from the eye of purity and inexorable justice that was searching him through and through.

"I will write to Harry," he exclaimed, at length, rising and taking his portfolio from a drawer; "he is, after all, the only real friend I have ever gained at school;" and snatching a pen, he proceeded to give his friend a full and confidential account of all that had transpired, not even omitting the conversation he had just held with Mr. Boardman. Having finished and sealed his letter, he descended with a calmer spirit to his evening tasks.

Effie was not long in deciding for herself the great subject of baptism; indeed, with respect to the mode, her mind had been made up from the time of Mrs. Emory's baptism. Ada, whose longing to be baptized had never abated, earnestly entreated her mother that she might be allowed to receive baptism with her teacher.

"Dear Ada," said her mother, "you know why it was deferred before; try yourself, my child, and see if you can obtain your father's consent. He may refuse you, but if so, wait

and pray a little longer. God will surely in his own time soften your dear father's heart. I do feel, Ada, that it is not so much his consent for which you are waiting as for the fulfillment of God's purposes of mercy in regard to him."

"If I could know that, mamma," said Ada, with a glowing face, "I would be content to wait, if need be, till the last day of my life."

Mr. Emory was in the habit of sitting in the library an hour after dinner to read his newspapers, and there Ada resolved to meet him and make her request. It is no wonder if the heart beat hard in her young bosom as she entered the room where her father had been for some time sitting. She had come from her closet, but the strength she had gained there seemed all to forsake her as she laid her hand on the library door. Mr. Emory did not look up as his daughter entered, for he was accustomed to her coming and going, and she had stood for several seconds behind his chair when he noticed her presence.

"Is there anything you want, Ada?" he asked, without raising his eyes.

"Yes, papa," said Ada, lifting one of the brown curls of her father's hair and winding it softly over her finger; "I came to tell you that dear Miss Bell is going to be baptized next Sunday, and to ask you if I might be." Here Ada's voice fairly broke down, and bursting into tears, she dropped on her knees beside her father's chair.

"When is my girl going to get over this silly habit of crying?" said Mr. Emory, in a grave but kindly tone. "Go to your room now, and when you are composed come and tell me what you want."

"I am composed now, papa," said Ada, with one of those sudden revulsions of feeling which sometimes follow intense excitement, and rising from her knees, she took a seat near her father.

"Then what is it you want?" inquired Mr. Emory, laying down his paper.

"I want to be baptized with Miss Bell," said Ada, firmly.

"Be baptized with Miss Bell!" said Mr. Emory, slowly repeating her words; "what do you know about being baptized?"

"I know, papa, that I love the Saviour. He was baptized, and he commands all that be-

lieve on him to be baptized, too. I want to obey him."

"You want to obey him, and displease your father. Is that it, Ada?"

"No, papa. I have waited almost a whole year for your permission, and I can wait longer still if you think best;" and Ada's lip quivered and the tears came again to her eyes as she spoke; it was very hard for her to say that, but strength was given in her time of need.

"But if God commands it, Ada?"

"He has made me willing to wait so long, papa, and if I am doing right, he will make me willing to wait longer, I think."

"But do you think you will be doing right to obey me in this matter?" asked Mr. Emory, keenly watching her changeful countenance. Ada answered slowly:

"I am only a child yet, papa; it is my duty to wait for your consent, I think."

"Well, then, Ada, I wish you to wait a while longer. I did not expect you would be carried away with these notions. I used to anticipate the time when you would be a very intelligent and accomplished lady, fitted to be an ornament to any society in which I might choose to place

you. But if you will go this way, I shall cherish no such hopes. By becoming a Christian, as it is termed, you devote yourself to a life of sobriety and self-denial—quite another thing from the life I had planned for you. I am almost ready to go to the city where you can live in splendor if you like. Wait another year before you make this choice, and then—”

“Oh, papa,” cried Ada, earnestly, interrupting him, “I have made my choice, and I cannot alter it! I love Christ, and I hope I shall never, never forsake him. Forgive me, papa,” she exclaimed, observing a shade of displeasure on her father’s face; “I did not mean to speak rudely, but indeed I cannot cease to love Christ.”

“That will do, Ada,” said Mr. Emory; “you can go now.”

“Say you forgive me, dear papa, for speaking so quickly,” cried Ada, with sudden tears; “I did not mean to be rude.”

“Yes, yes, my daughter,” said Mr. Emory, now fairly overcome, “I know you meant nothing wrong. There, now!” he added, opening the door for her; “you need no more tears over it; be careful and know what you are doing, and all will come round right.”

Ada fled to her room to hide her disappointment and her pain. She entered her closet, and closing the door, gave way to bitter tears. But calmer thoughts came at length, and casting her care upon Christ, she felt strengthened. Then seeking her mother, she told her all that had passed.

Mr. Emory returned to his seat when Ada had gone, and covering his face with his hands, sat for a long time silent. He had again disappointed his child, and this time he had done more—he had sought to tempt her from the way she believed to be right.

He was unhappy. Try as he would, he could not justify himself for this interference with her convictions of duty. Even the old plea of a year before—"If her religion is good for anything it will stand trial"—did not satisfy. It had stood trial for almost a year, and was still firm: what more had he a right to ask?

Mr. Emory finally cut short his uncomfortable reflections by putting on his hat and hurriedly quitting the house.



CHAPTER XIX.

THE FOURTEENTH BIRTH-DAY.

MRS. EMORY and Ada stood together at the water side as Effie was baptized, and grateful tears coursed down the cheeks of the former as she saw one for whom she had labored and prayed so long thus solemnly putting on Christ in his holy ordinance of baptism. Ada leaned upon her mother's arm, and a look of utter dejection had taken the place of the joyous expression with which she usually contemplated such a scene.

"Mamma," she whispered, "I do want to be baptized! How long shall I have to wait before I can follow my Saviour too?"

Mrs. Emory looked tenderly at her child. "The trial is indeed a hard one, Ada," she said, in a low tone, "but God will not allow it to be too hard. Look to him, my daughter, for he is

merciful and true, and his word declares that all things—‘all things,’ Ada—‘work together for good to them that love God.’”

Ada looked earnestly in her mother’s face, and the precious assurance of the unfailing word fell like balm upon her troubled heart.

“Yes,” she thought as she laid her head upon her pillow that night, “God can and will cause that ‘all things shall work together for good.’ He knows how truly I love him, and how much I desire to follow Jesus, and surely he will, in his own time, gratify that desire.”

A few days after her baptism Effie received a call from her pastor, Mr. Edwards.

“I have called on you, Miss Bell,” he said, after a little general conversation, “to lay before you the substance of a communication I yesterday received from a friend in the West.

“An academy has lately been established in the town in which he resides. He is principal, and writes to inquire if I know a lady who is qualified to take charge of the female department of such a school, and requests me, if such a person can be found, to engage and send her on as soon as possible. It is a place, he says, where an earnest

Christian lady is much needed, and where she can do a great deal of good.

"The salary is small and the work is hard, but you know our best rewards are not of this world. To do good and to win souls to Christ is our work, and wherever these can be best effected is the best place for us. I have resolved to offer the place to you, Miss Bell, but you need not decide anything to-day. Think of it, and I will call again after a few days."

"There is only one consideration," said Effie, to Mrs. Emory, after Mr. Edwards had gone, "that prevents my deciding at once to go, and that is, being so far separated from your family and from my dear brother."

"So far as we are concerned," replied Mrs. Emory, "Ada is soon to be sent to a boarding-school. When she is gone we shall have no special work for you to do, though we want you to feel that you have a daughter's place in our house, and that this is in every sense your home when you choose to make it such. Still, you have talents that require more scope than they can have here, and your duty to work for Christ is imperative."

"I want to be at work for him," said Effie. "I have withheld my love and service from him so long that I feel unwilling to lose a day. I want to be a missionary, Mrs. Emory."

"Then go to this new school. There is no better mission-field in this country than an institution of learning, and no one can be more extensively useful than the teacher."

Thus opinions were compared and desires expressed, and by the end of the week Effie had not only decided to go, but was on the way to pay a farewell visit to her brother.

She was kindly received by Mr. Boardman and his family, with whom James was now established more as a son than otherwise, and seeking, as soon as possible, a private interview with her brother, she told him all her plans.

"And now what does my brother say to all this?" she asked, in conclusion. "Will he let me go?"

"I have no power either to let or hinder," said James, with a forced smile, "and if I had, I should not use it in this case. I hope your decision is for the best, Effie."

"I am not looking at this matter," continued Effie, "in the light of earthly rewards. You

know, James, I belong to a new Master, and I must now find work to do for him."

"I don't know much about those things," said James, sadly, "but I suppose the feeling is quite consistent. I am sure, if I were confident I was saved, I should wish to devote my life to him who had saved me."

Tears sprang to Effie's eyes.

"Tell me, dear brother," she said, tenderly, "all that is in your heart, and let me help you if I can with my advice and my prayers."

"I have not much to tell you, Effie, but I am learning more and more that sin is a bitter and a cruel thing, and that if some means beyond mere human art cannot be found to remove it from the soul, it will for ever remain there."

He told his sister frankly what has been related in the last chapter, and received from her the encouragement and sympathy he so much needed.

"And how do your school-fellows treat you now?" inquired Effie.

"I have seen very little of them since," replied James, "as very soon after my teachers advised me to attend a school for more advanced learners in another part of the city, and I am

now doing so. When I meet them, however, they are kind and respectful—even more so than they were before. But I see their habits are telling upon a number of them, and two or three, if I mistake not, have not much farther to go before they are in the gutter.”

Effie was deeply moved. “Oh, James,” she exclaimed, “let us thank God continually for our dear mother’s dying words! Without them I have no doubt I should still be fast asleep in my sins, and you—”

“Neither you nor I can tell where,” added James, gravely.

The week of Effie’s visit passed rapidly away, and James was again alone. Unknown to him, his sister had left a few hundred dollars in the hands of Mr. Boardman, to be held in trust for him until he was ready to enter the university, and reserving barely enough to take her to her new field of labor, she had returned to take leave of the dear ones at Beech Grove.

“I think,” said Mrs. Emory as she and Effie were walking in the garden on the evening previous to Effie’s departure, “that you and I, dear Miss Bell, shall never meet again in this world.”

"Oh, Mrs. Emory, what do you mean? Surely we are both in perfect health! What can have given you such an idea?"

"Hush, dear!" said Mrs. Emory, pointing to Ada, who was in another part of the garden; "you greatly mistake if you think so. My work is nearly done. Though usually to appearance quite well, I have been for more than three years upheld by the strength of medicines which have now nearly lost their power over me. Long before you return to Beech Grove its mistress will have gained a more enduring mansion.

"Do not speak of what I have told you, for no one knows it save ourselves and my physician, and even he does not know that I have not told my husband."

"But should you not tell your family, dear Mrs. Emory? Perhaps something more could be done."

"No, no, there is no cure in my case, and I will not mar one hour of the happiness of my family by the knowledge of what is soon coming. I am daily praying God to give my poor child strength to bear her great trial, and make his heavy bereavement a means of eternal

good to my dear husband. Do not look so grieved, dear," she said, noticing Effie's tears; "I am quite ready—just waiting for the Master's call. There will be no surprise when it comes. I have waited for it daily for a very long time, and it will not be much longer delayed. But we who love Christ are never separated.

‘ One family we dwell in him,
One church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream, of death.’ ”

Effie hastened to the house to hide her tears from Ada, who was approaching. The next day she was far from Beech Grove, leaving sad hearts and tearful eyes behind her, not only in the house, where she had long been esteemed and loved, but in the church, where her earnestness and Christian worth were already beginning to be felt and valued.

We will not attempt to follow her through her long and wearisome journey, but will leave her to relate in her own words the circumstances connected with her arrival and establishment in the school. We quote a part of a letter written to Mrs. Emory soon after her arrival.

"It was late in the afternoon when the stage set me down at the only public-house in the place, and you may judge that after a very long ride without tasting food I felt relieved at the sight of a clean house and a well-spread table.

"The people of the house seemed to regard me with a good deal of curiosity, and at last the inn-keeper's daughter, a rosy girl of fifteen, asked me modestly if I was not the lady who was expected to teach in the new academy.

"You should have seen how her pretty face brightened up when I answered, 'Yes.' 'Oh, I'm so glad!' she exclaimed; 'I shall run right off and tell Mr. Everett, and you may be sure there will be great rejoicing at the academy. Mother, mother!' she called to a slender lady in black who was sitting in an adjoining room, 'here is Miss Bell! I am going right off to tell Mr. Everett.'

"Mrs. Foster, the inn-keeper's wife, gave me a cordial welcome, and placed the best in the house at my disposal. I soon discovered that the hotel was a temperance house, and that the family are warm-hearted, working Christians.

"In a short time Nellie returned, bringing

with her Mr. Everett, a rather reserved gentleman of pleasing manners, who greeted me kindly, and told me a warm welcome was waiting me at the academy. He gave me a brief history of the school and the struggle they had passed through to get it established, together with an idea of what my work is to be.

“As I was very weary, I remained where I was over-night, and in the morning walked over to the academy. There I was formally introduced by Mr. Everett to the pupils of my charge and to the other teachers.

“But I will not weary you with details. I am now fairly settled at my work, with about sixty girls of various ages and attainments under my charge, most of whom I already love very dearly. I have induced them all to attend a Bible class which I teach on Sunday mornings, and in which I am already deeply interested. We have a girls’ prayer-meeting twice in the week, and already there are tokens of good.

“There is a small church in the place, with which I united last Sunday, and with about twenty others—the entire membership—I sat

down to the table of our Lord. Is it not sweet to have such a privilege in this far-off land?"

It was not easy for Ada to be reconciled to the loss of her teacher. She had always loved her very dearly, but more especially since Effie's conversion, and a pure and exalted Christian friendship was rapidly springing up between them, when Effie's sudden removal to a distant home left Ada with a yearning for sisterly companionship such as she had never felt before.

"See, mamma, what Miss Bell has left in my album! I only found it just a minute ago," said Ada to her mother, some weeks after Effie's departure. "I like it very much, mamma, but somehow it makes me sad. It almost seems she must have known of some great trouble that was going to come to me that made her write this."

Mrs. Emory took the album from Ada's hand and read aloud:

"TO ADA.

"We call this life a blessing,
When sky and earth are fair,
And love with fond caressing
Walks with us everywhere—

When all the clouds in heaven
Are robed in softest white,
And future years are glowing
With hope's illusive light.

“ But oh, it is a blessing,
As well, when sorrow lowers;
When care and toil are pressing;
When droop life's fairest flowers :
'Tis *night* brings out the star-beam;
Clouds bear the blessed rain;
Earth's bosom must be riven
To reach her golden vein.

“ Then shrink not, though thy pathway
Be very steep and wild;
God never made a life-path
Too thorny for his child;
He never made a fountain
More bitter than he should,
Or sent a single chastisement
That was not meant for good.

“ I ask not that thy sunshine
Should have no clouded ray,
That piercing thorns should never
Hedge up thy earthly way,
Yet I will pray our Father
Round thee his arm to cast,
And guide thee through each danger
Up to himself at last !”

Mrs. Emory's eyes were full of tears as she finished reading. She handed the book to Ada, and tenderly kissing her, left the room in silence.

Ada's birth-day was almost past. She was fourteen years old. There had been some grateful reminiscences, some earnest prayers, the usual visit—never omitted—to the spot where, six years before, Ada so nearly lost her life had been made, a vase of beautiful June roses had been placed by Mrs. Emory's own hands in old Philip's little window to remind him of her darling's birth-day, a long kind letter to "dear Margaret," as she always called her, had been sent to the post, and then mother and daughter sat down as the twilight was gathering dimly over the beautiful hills, and the white mist was creeping softly along the cool river-bed and up to the green fragrant meadow-ground, to talk of God, his providence, and all he had done for them.

"Just think, my child!" said Mrs. Emory; "six years ago to-day there was not one in this house that loved God: now how many happy changes we can number!"

"Tell me, Ada," she continued, after a short silence, during which she had been gazing up through the open window at the stars that were shining above, "do you think, if I were called away from you before another birth-day, and you no longer had my advice and example to encourage you, that you would still follow the Lord Jesus?"

"Mamma, I believe that God would keep me true and faithful."

"Did it never occur to you, Ada, that some time your mother will leave you to walk all the rest of your earthly way alone?"

Ada sprang to her feet, and stood for a moment like one transfixed.

"Dear, dear mamma," she cried, with an energy that startled herself, "please do not speak of that to-night! That dreadful day is far, far away. I know, I am sure it is, mamma! Oh, please do not think of it any more!"

"Very well, my child, we will dismiss the subject very soon; but as long as you live, Ada, remember that on the evening of this birth-day I told you, as we were standing all alone in the pleasant moonlight, that I do not fear to die. There is not one cloud between me and heaven.

‘God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.’

“Nay, do not interrupt me, my daughter: hear me through, and remember every word I say. If I should leave you, that your father may be led to Christ is to be the great aim and object of your efforts and prayers. It is not to be effected by direct appeals—he is not one to be reached in that way—but by a holy Christian example, and by earnest prayer to God in his behalf.

“Remember for yourself, my love, that God is always near you, on the right hand and on the left, to strengthen and establish and sustain you. In the hour of trial—and it will come, Ada—go to him. In prosperity, go to him. ‘In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.’

“And now we will not talk any more. I feel weary, and am going to rest. Good-night, my darling; may God have you in his holy care and keeping!”

They walked together to the foot of the staircase, and receiving her mother’s kiss, Ada turned away into the darkness alone, and Mrs. Emory, entering the library, flung open the shutter,

and sat down where the clear moonlight poured its radiance over her and bathed her bowed head with a flood of glory.

Presently she rose, walked with a feeble step to the drawer where the old Bible was laid, and taking a key from her pocket, placed it in the lock and returned to her seat.

Thus, then, they had parted, mother and daughter, the one with the black cloud of a life-long sorrow hanging over her young head; the other with the uncreated glory of heaven, all unseen by mortal eyes, resting upon her.





CHAPTER XX.

THE SUDDEN CALL.

ADA retired to her room with a mingled feeling of awe and dread, and drawing aside the curtain, sat down for a while in the soft moonbeams. Gradually the calmness of the hour stole into her thoughts, and the painful emotions which her mother's words had excited gave place to more cheerful reflections. Her past life had been all bright: why should she cherish the dread of a sorrow which was, after all, so far away? Hopeful and happy, she could not, on the evening of this sweet birth-day, be sad.

She rose, and humming a little air, turned to her mirror. "I am so glad," she said to herself, noticing the roses with which her mother had crowned her—a birth-day custom never omitted—"that there are roses on my birth-day, dear mamma is so fond of them. What pretty

wreaths she makes too!" and Ada took off her fragrant coronet of buds and half-blown roses and laid it carefully in a drawer. "I am going to keep all my birth-day wreaths after this, to surprise mamma with the day I am twenty," thought Ada, and smiling at the girlish conceit, she took the wreath out again, and writing the word "Fourteen" upon a bit of paper, pinned it to the ribbon and laid it away very carefully in a pretty rosewood box her father had bought her that morning. Then taking a small memorandum from her pocket, she carefully noted down the words her mother had just said to her, read them over carefully, when done, to see that nothing had been omitted, then read her Scripture lesson and offered her evening prayer, and in a few minutes, fatigued with the scenes of the day, was fast asleep.

It was later than usual that night when Mr. Emory returned home, and instead of sitting down in the library, as he frequently did, he retired at once to his own room, but was surprised, on entering, to find his wife had not been there. He laid his hand on the door of the little closet where she often lingered late in prayer, but it

yielded to his touch: she was not there. He sat down and waited a short time, but there was no sound of coming steps; only the ticking of the hall clock broke the stillness of the quiet house.

"She must be reading in the library," he said, at last, taking up a night-lamp that was burning on the table, "but it's strange she did not hear me as I came up: perhaps she has fallen asleep." Hastening down stairs, he opened the library door gently. "Why, Julia," he exclaimed as he saw the open window and felt the rush of cool night air that met him, "you are beside yourself, sitting here in the open window at this hour! Julia!" he repeated, hastening forward, alarmed at receiving no answer, but there was no reply. He bent over her and laid his hand upon her forehead, but the chill went to his heart. A cold shudder ran through his frame as he turned the light full upon her face: she was dead!

The lamp fell from his hand with a crash; his brain reeled, he staggered toward a seat, but sank heavily upon the floor, with no power of motion. At length he recovered, and rising, rang the bell violently. Ada was first to waken,

and casting a wrapper round her, she snatched her lamp and hastened to the library.

"Papa, dear papa," she cried as she encountered his white face at the door, "what terrible thing has happened?" but in an instant her eye fell upon her mother's form, and the dreadful truth flashed upon her. She did not faint or cry, but with a face white as death leaned over her mother and kissed the cold brow and lips. "Dear, dear mamma!" she cried, at length, with a piteous wail, "look at me—oh, look at me and speak to me!" but there was no reply.

She turned to her father for help, but he was leaning against the door with a look that seemed to freeze her blood. She ran to him, and seizing his arm, cried out in terror, "Oh, papa! papa! don't—don't look so!" Then flinging one arm around his neck, she passed her hand caressingly over his brow and cheek and kissed his white lips, until the stony look melted away, and clasping his child in his arms, he burst into tears. Presently the rush of feet was heard on the stairs, and in an instant Mr. Emory had regained his self-possession. Stepping outside the door, which he held close shut behind him, he encountered John.

"John," he said, in a voice that sounded strange to the astonished servants, "take horses instantly, and go to S—— for Margaret Allen; don't lose an instant."

"But what shall I tell her?" inquired John.

"Tell her something dreadful has happened, and I sent for her. Here, Susan," he continued, turning to the girl, "you are no coward; run as quickly as you can for the doctor, and you, cook, stay with me. The rest of you had better go to your rooms until you are called."

There were no questions asked; all knew that something terrible had happened, and hastened to obey. Then Mr. Emory returned to the library, and lifting the inanimate form of his wife in his arms, bore her to her room and laid her on her own bed, where, rubbing and chafing the cold hands, they were vainly striving to restore animation when the doctor entered.

"It is all in vain, sir," he said, after a slight examination; "she is quite dead! Of course you expected it?"

"No. How should I expect it?"

"Why, this has been coming upon her for years, and she has been receiving medicines from me! Did you not know it?"

"Not a word, sir. Why did you not tell me?" said Mr. Emory, sternly.

"I never dreamt of your not knowing it," said the doctor, sorrowfully. "She has kept her secret well, but it's out at last."

Morning dawned upon Beech Grove as it had never dawned before. The shutters, usually thrown open to receive the first beams of the joyous sunlight, were closed, the knocker was muffled, the curtains were drawn, and servants and attendants moved through the dim rooms with noiseless tread and voices hushed to a whisper. The pretty crimson couch upon which for years Mrs. Emory had loved to recline at evening had been removed from her little parlor, draped in white, and conveyed to the great drawing-room, and there in her white robes, with her hands folded upon her bosom, and a sweet smile, almost life-like, upon her lips, lay the gentle wife who had so long filled that home with gladness.

The sun had been some time up when John, accompanied by Margaret, again reached Beech Grove.

Sick at heart with anxiety and dread, Mar-

garet shuddered as she looked up at the closed shutters, but when she saw the draping upon the door her worst fears were confirmed. Mr. Emory, who had heard the carriage, met her at the door, and his haggard face told better than words could how much he had suffered.

"This is no time for apologies, Mrs. Allen," he said, extending his hand; "I know by your coming that I am forgiven; come and see what death has done!"

Margaret could not speak. She followed Mr. Emory in silence to the darkened room, and bent in speechless sorrow over the dear remains of her friend.

"Where is Ada?" she said, at last, when the first outburst of grief had subsided.

"In her room. Will you go and see what can be done for her?"

Ada woke from a long, heavy sleep as Margaret bent over her pillow, and flinging her arms around the neck of her old nurse, wept aloud.

"Oh, Margie," she exclaimed with the old child-love in her tones, "it was so good of poor papa to send for you; you know you are next to my poor dear mother. Oh what shall I

do! What shall I do!" she moaned, sinking again on her pillow as the full sense of her loss swept over her.

Margaret felt how unavailing are words to stay the tide of such a grief, and she wisely offered none. But her presence, the touch of her loved hand, the consciousness that she was near, gave strength to the mourner, and in a little while she rose and allowed Margaret to dress her, and then leaning upon her nurse's arm, went to look again upon her mother. Mr. Emory rose as Ada approached, and with a look of deep anxiety watched her as she knelt by her mother's side and gazed long and earnestly into the sweet, calm, unanswering face.

"Papa dear," she said, after a long silence, "may I tell you what mamma said to me last night, just before she bade me good-night?"

"Yes, Ada," said her father, eagerly; "tell me every word."

Ada repeated the conversation almost in her mother's words; until she came to the part that related to himself.

"Is that all, Ada?" said Mr. Emory, who had listened with breathless attention.

"All, papa, except a little charge she gave me. I would rather not repeat it."

"But can you not tell me, Ada? You know they are her dying words."

Ada reflected a little: "I put it all in writing before I went to bed, papa. If you wish, I will copy it for you to read, but I do not like to repeat it."

"That will do; copy all she said to you—every word, just as she said it, if possible," replied Mr. Emory.

"I will," said Ada, and withdrew to comply with her father's wish.

"Mrs. Allen," said Mr. Emory, turning toward Margaret, "can you so far forget my severity toward you as to remain and take charge of Ada and the house until—"

"Oh, sir," said Margaret as he stopped, unable to say more, "do not speak of the past; only tell me how I can serve you, and I am ready."

"Then place yourself at the head of affairs for a time, and be specially mindful of Ada. I thought for a while last night I was going to lose her too, but I see she is better now. I have requested the servants to follow your

directions in everything; consequently, they will be looking for you to take the lead. I leave all in your charge."

Mr. Emory buried his face in his hands, and Margaret stole out of the room that she might not be a restraint upon his grief.

In a little while Ada entered, and slipping a paper into her father's hand, quietly withdrew. Mr. Emory did not look up until she had gone, when he stepped quickly to a window, and admitting a little light, read the last words of his departed wife. Then folding the paper and placing it carefully in his pocket book, he returned to his seat and buried his face again in his hands.

The long, dreary days of preparation for the funeral crept slowly on, and the sad hour of burial came at last, the dust returned to dust, and the grave closed for ever over George Emory's heart and hopes. The world, with all its pomp and glitter, had fallen from his hands, and returning to his desolate home, he crept away silently to his dreary room. There for many days he raved in the delirium of fever, while Ada and Margaret, in their anxious watch-

ings over the living, almost forgot to mourn for the dead.

"Oh that he might be spared until he is prepared to die!" was the burden of Ada's agonized prayer, and she was heard. Nature at length asserted herself, the crisis of the fever passed, and slowly, very slowly, Mr. Emory regained his strength. But it was not till the early autumn began to drape the forest in its golden tints that he was able to leave his desolate house and walk with Ada to her mother's grave.

"Ada," said her father as they stood by the grave in the mild sunlight of an autumnal evening, "I am going to travel for a few months; would you like to go with me?"

"No, papa," replied Ada, after a little thought; "I could not leave mamma."

"What a strange fancy, Ada! Your mother is not here."

"I know, papa—indeed I never forget it for a moment—that her happy spirit rejoices with the angels in the presence of the dear Redeemer. I am so glad you can think of that; it will give you so much comfort."

Mr. Emory made no reply. His eyes were bent upon the grave, and Ada could not tell that he had even heard her.

“Do you not think, Ada,” he said, after a long pause, “that it would be better for you to go with me than to remain in this dreary home alone?”

“Oh no, papa, if you please; the long, cold winter is coming on, and I must be here to visit this grave every day. I know it is useless, but I must watch her bed this one winter, and in the spring plant some violets here to make the air fragrant, and place some roses at her head, and watch till the birds come and sing over her to make the place cheerful. I do not quite think of mamma as dead,” she added, hesitatingly, after a long pause, during which her father had not lifted his eyes. “May I tell you, papa, how I think of her?”

“Yes, Ada,” said her father, looking her full in the face. His gaze embarrassed her, but she continued timidly:

“I think of her, papa, as a dear, blessed saint in heaven, among the happy ones who know no sin and all the time rejoice in the presence of the blessed Saviour. To think of her thus,

papa, always comforts me, even when I am weeping for her the most."

Mr. Emory did not reply, but drawing his daughter's arm within his own, walked slowly away.

He did not urge her to accompany him; he rather preferred to go alone—away, away, anywhere, if he might but still the cry of an awakened conscience that would not rest night or day, but evermore presented the words, the example, the life, and the death of his lost one in proof of the truth of her holy religion.

Instead of going to the same source of light and comfort that she had sought, he longed to fly from himself, his thoughts, his convictions, and drown all in the excitement of travel and in the bustle of the great world. So placing his business in the hands of a trusty agent, and his house in charge of Margaret and his faithful John, he set sail for the Old World, to try if change could bring no balm to his wounded heart, no rest to his troubled spirit.



CHAPTER XXI.

THE OLD BIBLE ONCE MORE.

AS soon as the funeral was over, Ada had as far as possible assumed her mother's religious work in the family, and daily, at the sunset hour, read the Scriptures and offered prayer. At first she had shrunk timidly from this duty, but by degrees, encouraged by John and Margaret, and by her father's wish that she should carry out her mother's regulations in the family, she came to feel it not only easy, but pleasant.

Susan, whose manner and temper had greatly changed during the last years of Mrs. Emory's life, was almost broken-hearted at her loss, and convictions of sin, with which she had been struggling for years, were, by the sudden death of her mistress, greatly deepened in her heart. Her ill-will toward Margaret, whom she always regarded as a rival, for some time prevented her

telling her trouble to her, but the burden finally became so great that she told her all, confessed how unkindly she had felt and spoken, and begged forgiveness.

Margaret listened to her with tears of joy, and taking the poor girl's hand in hers, knelt and commended her to the Saviour of sinners. Then selecting some of the precious promises of God's word, she gave them to her, saying: "Take them, Susan; they are Jesus' own words: go away to your closet, and tell them to him, and beg him to take all the unbelief out of your heart, so that you may realize that he meant to do for you just what he said he would. Believe his precious promises, and he will surely fulfill them all."

Susan followed Margaret's advice, and led by the Holy Spirit to a humble trust in Christ, she was soon enabled to rejoice in him as her own Redeemer.

"And so, Susan," said Ada, with grateful tears, "my dear mother's prayers and patient efforts for you are at last rewarded?"

"Yes," said the girl; "if she had not been patient with me, I should be living still in sin. It was her patient efforts to benefit me, ungrate-

ful and selfish as I was, which first made me feel that religion was so much better than anything else. But shall I tell you, Miss Ada, the very first thing that made me feel my terrible danger? It was a verse I read in an old Bible that I saw you, one morning when you were a very little girl, hide under your pillow. I was angry with you at the time, and I went slyly to see what it was, in hopes I could find something to tell your mother against you, and when I opened the book the very first thing I saw was: 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.' I did not read any more, but that verse stuck to me all the time, day and night, and when your mother gave us our Bibles, it was a long time, Miss Ada, that I would not open mine, for fear of seeing those words again. I have never found them since, though lately I have often looked for them, but until the blessed Saviour made me feel his love they were always like a sharp thorn in my heart, when I went to sleep and when I woke up, and all day long. But Jesus has taken away the thorn and made me as happy as I was miserable; and oh, I shall never, never cease to thank him for showing me that verse, and for giving me your dear,

dear mother to bear with my ill-temper so many years !”

Ada often received letters from her father, but they were short, merely stating the different places he had visited, but never alluding either to his sorrows or his plans. Poor man ! he was hurrying on from place to place, seeking in the rush of travel and the whirl of excitements to silence the voice of God within him. His heart was full of bitterness, too. He believed God had taken his treasure from him in wrath and not in love, and his heart rebelled against him. So he hurried on, waging more and more fiercely the unequal warfare that must end either in submission or in ruin. Thrice the rod of affliction has fallen and he has not looked up : will he never recognize a Father’s hand and bow beneath it ? or will he go on in rebellion until chastisement ends in retribution ?

It was a fine day in spring ; Ada was returning from planting some roses on her mother’s grave ; she called, as was her custom, at the cottage of her old friend, the basket-maker.

“ Do you know, sir,” said Ada, after a little

talk, pointing to the painting on the mantel-piece, "that I have never forgotten your promise to tell me the story of that beautiful group? The last time I reminded you of it you wished me to wait until I was prepared by sorrow for so sad a tale. I think I shall never have a greater sorrow than I now know."

"Ah, dear child," replied the old man, earnestly, "there are deeper sorrows than yours. Your grief is full of joy, but there are sorrows that bring with them no consolation: such neither you nor I, thank God! have ever known. Our loved ones have gone to God; they are at rest, and the only sorrow we can feel in respect to them is that for a little while we are deprived of their society. To have one friend whom we dearly love unsaved should be deeper grief, if viewed aright, than to give back even the dearest we have on earth to the arms of Jesus."

"I had not thought of that," said Ada, tears starting to her eyes as she thought of her father.

Philip interpreted her emotion aright, and said very gently, "You could not be expected to think of all these things, my child, but let your prayers be earnest and your faith strong,

and be careful lest your grief for the dead should weaken your solicitude for the living. And now, if you have time to listen, sit down, and I will tell you of the path of sorrow by which God graciously led me to the knowledge and love of his dear Son.

“I was not always, Miss Ada, poor and dependent upon my own toil as you now see me, nor was I always a Christian. Once I was rich and proud, full of ambition and worldly hopes, and strong in the hatred which is felt by my nation—for I am a Jew—against Christ and the Christian faith. My father, who lived in one of the small German states, was a banker, and like many of his race possessed vast riches. My only brother, whose passion for art was strong from his childhood, was placed under the best masters, to be thoroughly instructed in his profession, while I, who was to follow my father’s calling, was carefully educated in all that pertained to business as well as in the various branches of learning.

“When quite young I became acquainted with a very lovely lady—you see her image there, Miss Ada—but she was a Christian and poor. She had been carefully educated by her

mother, who had once occupied a high station in society, in all the elegant accomplishments, and was fitted, both in person and mind, to grace the highest circles of refinement and culture.

“The result of this acquaintance was that we loved each other—she a poor Christian, and I a proud Jew—and regardless of all consequences we were privately married. When I told my father what I had done, he was furious, forbade my ever again entering his door, and vowed to disinherit me and transfer by his will the whole of his vast wealth to my brother, commanding that my name should never again be mentioned in his house.

“You would have thought, Miss Ada, that, cast off as I was, I would have turned to the religion of my wife for comfort, but few can understand the love of a Jew for the religion of his fathers. I would not listen to the arguments and persuasions of my wife, and strove continually to induce her to adopt my religion. But she could not deny Christ, neither could I accept him, and so we became disunited more and more.

“In my boyhood I had learned to weave baskets as a youthful amusement; now, deprived

by my father's displeasure of all means of support, I fled far from home, and renting a small cottage in the suburbs of one of the great German cities, I began to labor for the support of my family. I was very successful; my beautiful wares were eagerly sought for; and in a little while we were able to live in ease and comfort. Still we were not happy. My two little girls, who, in the mean time, had come to gladden our hearts, almost with their first words learned to lisp the name of Jesus, and as they grew older they shrank from my stern ways, and turned to the gentler teaching and the purer faith of their mother.

"Each year I grew more and more bitter, often speaking in the presence of my wife and children very dreadful words against Jesus of Nazareth—words, Miss Ada, that would chill your blood to hear. Often they would grow pale at my blasphemies and hasten from my presence.

"One pleasant summer day, when my little girls were grown to be as you see them there, we were surprised at seeing my brother, who all that time I had not once heard from, enter our door. He gave his hand kindly to each

of us, kissed our children, and then sitting down by my side, he said :

“ ‘ Brother Philip, I have sought very long for you, and had almost given you up, but, God be praised ! I have found you at last ! ’

“ Then he told me our father was dead, that, enraged at him for becoming a Christian, he had a little before his death put all his wealth into the hands of a distant relative, who had soon wasted it all in gambling and dissipation.

“ ‘ And you have become a Christian ! ’ I cried, fiercely, and then I uttered many cruel and bitter words, and blind with rage and grief I fled from the house.

“ My brother remained a few hours in the house talking with my family, and then he went sorrowfully away, not, however, till he had made the sketch for that beautiful painting, which he took away with him. When I returned to the house I found my little Eva sick. For many days she pined, but her mind never wandered. She talked all the time, when her strength would permit, about Jesus, and how he died on the cross to save poor sinners, but at last, with his name upon her lips, she died. I loved my little girl, and grieved for

her very deeply, and from the day of her death I began to read the Christian Scriptures, and to search the prophecies for the things concerning Christ.

“It was not long after Eva was buried before Miriam, her sister, fell sick with the same fever. She was four years older than Eva, as wise as she was beautiful, and her heart was full of love to Jesus. I sat by her for many days and nights, while she spoke to me of her Saviour, and smiled with such deep joy as one has seldom seen when I would listen to her mother reading of Jesus, of his patient suffering, and his cruel death. At last, listening to the words of eternal life, and with a sweet smile on her face, she too passed away. Then my heart was broken, and casting myself down by her little bed, I wept and prayed until Jesus showed me his bleeding wounds and gave me strength to look and live.

“Well, Miss Ada, there was no grief then in our home, though both our loved ones were gone, for we saw them in the arms of Jesus, and we knew that they were waiting for us above, where there would never be either sorrow or sin. Then how sweet it was for us

to talk together about the precious Saviour—the Messiah—whom I had always been looking for in the future, but who I now saw had been slain on Calvary for my sins!

“But this happiness was not to last. In a little while my gentle wife fell sick. Oh, how I prayed that she might live!—for I felt I had only just learned to love her aright—but God had willed it otherwise. She lingered a little while, as if to show me how blessed a thing is Christian fellowship, and then she fell asleep in Jesus.

“Oh, Miss Ada, had it not been for the love of my Saviour then, I should have died too; but he stood by me, and held me up so lovingly that I was able to rejoice all the time, though my burden was so great.

“After I buried my precious wife, whom I never truly loved until I learned to love her Saviour, I sold all my wares and set out to find my brother. It was a wearisome search, Miss Ada, and took many months, but at last I found him in the great city of Amsterdam, where he had gone to practice his art. When I told him all my loved ones were dead he mingled his tears with mine, but when I told him, further, that God had led me through this

great sorrow to accept Christ as my Saviour, and that now I was serving the blessed Jesus, whom I so lately hated, he took both my hands in his and said :

“ ‘ Brother Philip, let us rejoice together, for now there is no more separation between us and them. Now we are all united in Christ, and in a very little while we shall all sit down together in the kingdom of our Lord.’

“ So, Miss Ada, he comforted me with many precious words ; then he took me by the hand, and led me through a little door at one end of his studio, and lifting a white curtain, showed me that picture. Had my wife and children come back to me, Miss Ada, I could scarcely have been more amazed. He told me how he obtained it, and said, if I would stay with him a month, he would paint another for himself, and this should be mine. So I waited, and at the end of a month, taking my treasure with me and bidding my only brother a last farewell, I made my way to the nearest sea-port, where I embarked for America.

“ I landed in Boston many years ago, and becoming acquainted with a church which had a faithful minister, I asked to be baptized in the

name of the Lord Jesus Christ; so I was baptized there, and there I lived until, tired of the great city and its pomp, I came away to this little cottage, where I have spent many quiet years, and where I soon expect to die."

Ada gazed long and thoughtfully upon the lovely faces whose history she had just heard, and then thanking the old man for his kindness, she walked slowly homeward.

"Here is a letter for you, Miss Ada," said John, meeting her at the gate, "and I think, from the way it is marked, it contains something important."

Ada glanced at the letter, and saw it was from her father. Opening it hastily, she read:

"MY CHILD: I have just received important news from my agent in New York which will hasten my return home. I hope to set sail by the end of the week, if not earlier. My health is not good, and anxiety in regard to my affairs is aggravating my indisposition. I hope, however, that this may find you and the family well, and trust that I shall see you soon.

"Your Father,

"G. EMORY."

Margaret and Ada were full of anxiety and uneasiness, yet nearly a month wore away before Mr. Emory's return. Ada was shocked, when at last he came, to see his pale face and bent form, and when, after a few hours, he requested to see her alone, her heart sunk under the dread of some great calamity. She followed her father to the library, where, throwing himself upon a sofa, he remained for some time silent.

"How old are you, Ada?" he inquired, at length.

"Almost fifteen, papa."

"And are you going to be a strong, high-minded young woman, do you think, able to face difficulties with a brave heart?"

"I hope so, papa," said Ada, smiling. "Tell me what difficulties I have to meet, and I shall try to be brave."

"Well, my girl," replied Mr. Emory, "it is time you should know that your father is very poor—a bankrupt—with very little more than enough property to pay off his creditors."

"Is that all, papa?" said Ada, after waiting some time for her father to say more.

"That's all," said Mr. Emory, looking up, and bursting into a hollow laugh as he saw Ada's

calm face. "Isn't that enough, or does my young heroine want something more?"

"It doesn't seem to me so very hard, papa," said Ada, taking a seat by her father's side. "Don't look so distressed, dear papa," she continued, laying her hand caressingly upon her father's hot temples; "I am young and strong, and can work for both you and me."

"What can *you* do?" asked Mr. Emory, bitterly.

"Many things, papa. You will see I can when I am tried."

"Which will be soon enough, Ada," replied her father, the transient smile fading from his pale face. "But you will know enough of these difficulties as they come along. In the mean time, do you think you are enough of a writer to help me at some copying?"

"Oh yes, papa!" cried Ada, delighted at having an opportunity to show herself useful; "I'm sure I am!"

"Well then," said Mr. Emory, smiling at her eagerness, "bring your desk, and I will soon give you a trial."

Ada hastened to comply, while her father produced a number of papers from his portmanteau

and proceeded to arrange them before him upon the table.

"Here is a paper," he said as Ada took a seat by his side, "that I want copied very carefully; you may try your hand at it first."

Ada took the paper, and after reading it over carefully, went to work. Mr. Emory often glanced nervously from his own work, as the delicate little hand glided over the paper with what seemed to him most objectionable speed, and once or twice he took the copy from her, to see if she could really be making it correctly, but when he saw it all so clearly and carefully written, he gladly gave himself up to his own work and left Ada to hers.

"Papa," said Ada, after they had worked thus for some time, and Mr. Emory had examined and approved of her first copy, "please let me do this alone. I can copy them quite easily in a few hours, and you can go and get some rest. You look so tired, papa, and I am quite fresh, you see."

Mr. Emory looked at the bright young face, so full of eagerness and hope, and he resolved to try her.

"Very well, my girl," he said; "you may try

what you can do. Call me when you get sleepy, and I will go and rest till then, for I am very tired."

He laid his hand gently upon his child's head as he passed, and Ada felt it one of the proudest moments of her life. Her dear father had seen she could be useful; he was trusting her with important work; she was going to help him to bear his burdens. Animated by such feelings, and with nothing to distract her thoughts, Ada worked on, quite regardless of the lapse of time, until the last paper was copied and carefully compared with the original, and then rising, she hastened to her father's room. The great clock struck two, sending a hollow echo through the house, as Mr. Emory, awakened by Ada's rap, appeared at the door.

"You *have* been very brave," he said, smiling as he heard the hour; "I did not expect you to finish them all, Ada. But you must go to bed and get some rest now," he continued, taking the papers from her hand, "and I will go down to the library for a little while."

"She has done a great night's work," he said, glancing at the papers he held, and then after looking them carefully over, he placed them in

a drawer, and walked to and fro through the room. At length he paused before the drawer in which, years before, he had laid the old Bible. It was slightly open, and the rusty key, which he instantly recognized as the one he threw away, was in the lock.

"This is strange," he said, opening the drawer and lifting the book from its place. For a moment he stood undecided, and then, still holding the book in his hand, he turned to a light and sat down.





CHAPTER XXII.

THE NIGHT IN THE GRAVEYARD.

IT was not so much for the purpose of reading that Mr. Emory carried the book to the light as to see if there were any traces of the beloved hands that had once used it. With a heart sore and bleeding from the wounds of sorrow, which his return home had opened afresh, with the harassing anxiety connected with his failure in business, and with the unsatisfied craving of his soul for some substantial good, it was only natural that he should seek in that old book, which so many dear ones had read, some traces of the warm human love that had once been his, and for a little while give himself up to the mournful memories it suggested.

“Poor Mary!” he sighed, after tracing the almost illegible letters of her name; “I remember well the day she received this little book

from the superintendent of the Sunday-school. It was a great treasure to her, poor girl! She was a very lovely character, yet scarcely more so than Jane, whose name is here too, I see.

"Why, here is Julia's name, in her own writing," he continued, turning over the leaf; "and what is this?" Holding the book close to the light, for the delicate pencil-marks were hard to trace, he read:

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Mr. Emory laid aside the book and walked slowly up and down the room. He had not accustomed himself to think of the God revealed in the Bible as a being of love, but as one full of wrath, and ready to execute vengeance upon those who obey not his law. God's love was a new thought to him, and his sick heart grasped at the solace it offered.

“But if God really loves his creatures as those words declare, why does he afflict them?” thought Mr. Emory. “He has removed my children, my wife, my property, and my health: this surely does not look much like love. If there is love in him, it is for others, surely, and not for me.”

Then suddenly, as a long-buried memory, flashing up from the sweet lessons of his childhood, there came to him: “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

He took up the old book, the long-neglected, long-despised Bible, and with a mingled feeling of curiosity and hope opened it at the fourteenth chapter of John, and again seating himself, read the whole of it. When it was finished he went back and read it all again, and yet again, with increasing wonder. Then he read those last lessons of Christ to his disciples, that most wonderful prayer in which the deep heart of love seems all laid open to our gaze, the affecting story of the Last Supper, the betrayal, the mock trial, the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It was the first time since the days of his childhood that he had read this mournful, wondrous

tale, and long before it was finished tears were coursing down his face.

"Why have I never read this before?" he asked himself. "If this is all true, how great must be my guilt in so long closing my heart against it!" He turned back and read the whole again. "Ah!" he exclaimed when he had finished, "I see it all now! A cup of gladness has been pressed to my lips all my days, and I would not taste it, and now it is too late! I cannot come to Christ now, for how shall I, who all my life have rejected him, insult the love I have scorned by offering him the miserable remnant of a life that is now valueless? Shall I, now that home and family and wealth and health are all gone, and my hands empty of every treasure, come and ask Christ to take me up? No, no! I have rejected him, and it is only right that he should reject me. I will not add insult and mockery to my life-long contempt by offering him such an utterly worthless thing as myself! Oh, I see it: it is love, and only love, that I have scorned; and now that my soul cries out in its desolation for love there is no love for me!"

Mr. Emory glanced at the window. It was a

clear morning, and the east was already kindling with the rays of the rising sun. He blew out his useless lamp, and wearily ascending to his room, placed the Bible under his pillow, and without undressing threw himself upon the bed and sank into a heavy sleep.

Ada waited so long for her father to make his appearance at breakfast that she finally became anxious, and hastening to his room, tapped softly at the door. Receiving no answer, she entered the room and approached the bed. He was extremely pale, and his breathing so low that she held her ear close to his face to discover if indeed he breathed at all.

"How pale and sick he looks!" thought Ada, tears springing to her eyes. "Oh, if these troubles should kill him!" and Ada fled to her room to give unrestrained vent to her sorrow.

"Miss Ada," said Susan, tapping at the door, "are you there?"

"Yes, Susan."

"Tell your father, then, if you please, that there are some gentlemen below waiting for him."

Ada reflected a moment, and then giving some

hasty directions to Susan, returned to her father's room.

"Papa!" she said, gently, bending over him.

Mr. Emory wakened with a start, but seeing who had called, inquired, "What is it, Ada?"

"Can you get up, papa," said Ada, taking one of his hot hands in hers, "and have some breakfast?"

"Is that all, my child?" said Mr. Emory, wearily; "you should have let me sleep."

"No, papa, it is not all. There are gentlemen below who want to see you, but I sent word you were unwell and could not see them till you had some breakfast. Susan has gone to get you something nice and hot, and I am going to lay a cloth right here on this little table, so that you can eat all by yourself."

"You are very thoughtful, Ada," said her father, watching her as she moved so cheerfully about the room, bringing him water and towel, and holding the glass while he brushed his hair.

"Didn't I tell you, papa, I could do many things?"

"Yes, you did, and I need your help now, my child, more than you can know."

Susan entered with the tray as he was speaking, and seating himself at the table, Mr. Emory took a hasty breakfast, and then went down to see what was wanted. In a few minutes he returned, saying he was going to the city and should be absent for some time.

"I will write in a few days," he said; "in the mean time, Ada, you must try and keep up a brave heart, and not get lonely."

"Don't think of me, papa," said Ada, but the tears rushed to her eyes as he turned away, and she saw how old he had suddenly grown and with what a weary step he walked with the two strangers to the carriage.

It was nearly two weeks before any letter came to Ada, but at last, when her heart was almost failing with anxiety, she received the following note:

"DEAR ADA: My business is at last settled. I have enough, thank God! to pay all my debts, and a little is left. Beech Grove is sold, and must be given up in a month. You will tell the servants our trouble, and give them notice to be ready to leave at the expiration of that time.

"I shall be home in a few days, to settle up

matters preparatory to leaving. You will be glad to know that in the terms of sale I have been able to reserve the library and the best of the furniture, besides many things your mother prized, and from which I knew we should both be very unwilling to part.

“You will grieve over the dear old home; but never mind! though there is much loss, there is no disgrace. Let us both be thankful for that.

“Your father,

G. E.”

That evening Ada read her father's letter to the servants, and in a few brief sentences explained matters to them, and then hurried to her room, that she might not witness their grief, and might give unrestrained indulgence to her own. For the first time she realized the magnitude of the calamity that had overtaken them. Until that day her father's losses had not seemed to her to involve much, but when she saw that the family was to be broken up, the dear home abandoned, and even her mother's grave forsaken, her heart failed, and she abandoned herself to her sorrow. Casting herself upon the bed, she gave way without restraint to her grief in passionate tears.

"Ada," said Margaret, an hour after, as she entered the room and found her still in tears, "do you remember the last charge your mother gave you?"

Ada rose from the bed and looked earnestly at her nurse. "Yes, Margaret, I do," she answered, "and I know what you are thinking of. You are thinking how very sinful I must be to lie here weeping over this worldly trouble, which, after all, might be so much worse, while my poor dear father is unsaved.

"Oh, dear Margaret, I have been very sinful to grieve so much over these paltry things when I should have been praying God to sanctify them to my poor father's spiritual good."

"Let us both pray," said Margaret, in a low tone, and kneeling together, they poured out their united prayers that God would make his great trials the means of everlasting good to Mr. Emory.

It was late in the afternoon of the following day that Ada welcomed her father again to Beech Grove. Weary and sick, his heavy heart was relieved of some of its burden as he saw her hastening to the gate to meet him, and

shaking off the increasing gloom that had been settling upon his spirits, he greeted her with a smile, and for a few minutes conversed cheerfully. But Ada soon saw that it was all forced, that he was cheerful only in order to hide his anxiety from her notice, and she struggled hard to appear happy that she might the more easily make him so. She tried many gentle arts to win him from his despondency, but it was all in vain. The cloud, which had been lifted for a moment only, settled again upon his spirits, and as soon as tea was over he retired to the library, while Ada, disappointed and grieved, fled to her room, there to seek for her father higher and better consolation than she was able to give him.

As soon as it was dark Mr. Emory rang for lights, intending to devote the evening to writing, but the long pent-up anguish of his heart, so sternly held in check before strangers, burst forth in the solitude of his own room, and thrusting the papers from him, he buried his face in his hands in inconsolable wretchedness.

At length he raised his head, and drawing from his pocket the old Bible, which he had kept constantly with him since the last evening at

home, he opened it and began to read. With all the earnestness of a soul that feels its ruin and longs to discover a way of escape, he had read it during his absence—sometimes with the anguish of despair, and sometimes with a glimmer of hope, but ever with constantly-increasing interest.

Opening at the Gospel of John, a portion of which had first arrested his attention, he read it carefully through, and then laying aside the book, he walked out into the soft moonlight. Slowly and half unconsciously he turned his steps toward the graveyard, but his thoughts were not of her by whose grave he at last stood: they were occupied with the awfully momentous question, "What shall I do to be saved?" Raising his hat, he stood reverently beneath the solemn stars, while a sense of God's awful majesty seemed borne from those far-off worlds to his spirit, and he stood subdued and silent, as in the presence of God.

"I do believe," he said, at length, laying his hand upon the Bible, which he had replaced in his pocket before leaving the house, "that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I find irresistible evidence of it here, and those simple, earnest

lives which I have studied so long are full of holy confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion. And if Christ is, in very truth, the Saviour of ruined and perishing sinners, if he is really the gracious and loving One he is here declared to be, he must, he will, receive me, though I have so long despised his grace and rejected his love. He has promised, and he will do it. Surely he will not turn me away, when I fly to him as my only refuge," he continued, with sudden tears, and casting himself upon the grave of his wife, for the first time in his life he prayed: "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

How long he lay thus upon the damp earth he neither knew nor cared. The hours stole on, and still he prayed, but no longer with the despairing cry of one who finds no response to his petition, for Jesus had met him, and to the one strong cry of his broken heart had answered: "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee!"

When Mr. Emory rose from his knees the night was far advanced. The moon had long passed the zenith, and was descending the western sky, and the silence of nature was profound. He looked up at the tall trees as he passed them on his way homeward, but it seemed to him that

each stood as in the very atmosphere of worship. The white clouds that lay so still in the soft summer heavens seemed hushed in prayer. God sat upon the circle of the heavens. God looked forth from the starry spheres. God, reconciled, compassionate, forgiving, filled all nature—filled and overflowed his whole being. He was in a new world, and that world was love.

Mr. Emory entered the house and walked quietly to the library. It was to him no longer a house of mourning, full of sorrowful thoughts of bereavement and loss. Jesus entered with him, Jesus walked by his side, Jesus was his Guest, and the solemn sweetness of his presence filled the whole place. Full of wonder and joy, Mr. Emory sat down, for he felt no disposition to sleep; but soon a light step in the passage was heard, and in a moment Ada was at the door.

“Are you ill, papa?” she inquired, anxiously.

“No, Ada, I am not ill. But you have not been staying up till this hour, to wait for me, have you? It is very late.”

“I heard you go out, papa, and I feared you were ill, so I have been staying up to see if I could do anything for you.”

"Come in, Ada," said Mr. Emory, opening the door. "I am not much sorry, after all, that you are up, for I want to speak to you. Do you know, Ada," he continued, leading her to a seat, "what I have found to-night?"

"No, papa."

"What do you desire for me above all things else, Ada?"

Ada looked earnestly at her father. What had she been praying for all those long hours? Dared she tell him? Would he be angry with her for such a thought?

"May I tell you, papa?" she inquired, timidly.

"Yes, my child, I wish you to tell me."

"It is that you may find the blessed Saviour, papa."

"Ada," said Mr. Emory, taking both her hands in his, "I have found the blessed Saviour to-night, and he has forgiven all my sins, and now I am going to give all the rest of my life to his service."

Ada had risen to her feet as her father commenced speaking, and uttering a cry of joy as she heard the blessed words, she threw herself into his arms and wept aloud.

"Oh, I'm so glad, so glad, papa!" she cried,

at length, lifting her wet face from her father's bosom. "Oh, if dear mamma were only here to share our joy!"

"I think she shares it, Ada," said Mr. Emory, solemnly, "for 'there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,' and I cannot doubt that she is permitted to rejoice with them. Let us bless God, Ada, that he took your dear mother to himself—that he took away my wealth, and emptied my hands of everything in which I was trusting—for had he not done so, I fear I should have never learned to trust in his dear Son. But for those chastisements, Ada, I should still be a proud rebel, scorning God's word and despising his Son."

As Mr. Emory ceased speaking he knelt down, and for the first time Ada heard her father's voice in prayer. Rising from his knees, he tenderly dismissed her to her room, and with a heart full of gratitude and love retired to his own. Ada stole softly to Margaret, and waking her, told her the joyful news, and then Ada and Margaret called Susan to rejoice with them. Thus the night, which had begun in tears, ended in thanksgiving and praise.

At an early hour Mr. Emory called all his family together, and in a few impressive words told them what God had done for his soul. Then the dear little Bible—the old, worn, and faded Bible—was brought forward, and in broken utterances he told its history, pausing as he went on for Ada to explain the mystery of the key, and then opening it, he read the twenty-third Psalm, and kneeling, gave thanks to God for his unspeakable love in the gift of his dear Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour of men.

When breakfast was over he visited the basket-maker, to whom he had never once spoken since the day of that memorable visit. Grasping the old man's hand, he held it in his till he told him of the new joy he had found in believing in Jesus, thanked him for his Christian faithfulness and forbearance, and begged to be forgiven and accepted as a brother in Christ.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” said the old man, reverently, “for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, in that while we were yet enemies Christ died for us! Ah, my dear sir, not a day has passed since our first and only interview in which I

have not prayed for you, and now my prayer is heard. To God be all the glory !”

The following Sunday evening Mr. Emory, Ada, and Susan were baptized. As Ada watched her father while he was led down into the baptismal tide, and saw him buried in the likeness of the blessed Redeemer, her heart swelled with gratitude to God, who had crowned her long waiting with such a rich reward. And as the newly-baptized ones stood side by side when the ordinance was past, with the light of that summer sunset falling upon their bowed heads, one might well believe that angels rejoiced over them, and that Jesus looked down well pleased upon these new witnesses of his death and resurrection.





CHAPTER XXIII.

REMOVALS TO NEW YORK.

ADA," said Mr. Emory, a few days after the events above narrated, "I have been praying God to direct us to some place where we might be very useful, and I think my prayer has been answered. I have just received a letter from an old friend in New York with whom I have had business relations for many years, and he offers, if we will work on salary, to take both you and me into his employment.

"He will give me a good position as head-manager in one department of his business which is very extensive, and to you he will give a good situation in the millinery department, proposing, if you like the business and do well, to place you in a few years at its head. But you know, Ada, your education and training have not been calculated to fit you for any such position. You will have much hard labor, and

moreover your place in society will be very different from the one which I always hoped to see you occupy.

“But there is another department of labor open to you which you can enter if you prefer. Some weeks ago I wrote to Miss Bell, stating my difficulties and asking if you could obtain a situation as assistant teacher in the school in which she is employed. I have just received her reply. She says they are in great need of an assistant music teacher, and begs me to send you to her at once, promising to give you whatever help you may need, and to be a true sister to you.

“Now, Ada, I leave you to your own choice. You see our position: a life of toil and self-denial is before us, and we must not shrink from it.”

“Have you no choice for me, papa?” inquired Ada, anxiously.

“Yes, Ada, I have, but I shall not express it. Pray and meditate over the matter during the day, and this evening I will hear your decision.”

At evening Mr. Emory called Ada to the library to hear what she had resolved to do, so

that he might settle his plans accordingly. He had felt anxious all day respecting her decision. Would she, because the business of a teacher was popularly esteemed more respectable than the other, go away from him? If she should prefer it, could he complain? Could he ask her to adopt the toilsome life which he had chosen for himself?—to take a social position below the one she might prefer, and for which she would soon be fitted?

No; he would be unselfish. He would consider her good first. He would let her make her own decision, and try to acquiesce in it, even though it should take her, who was now his earthly all, away from him. Yet, after all, how could he live without her gentle companionship, her loving support?

“Well, Ada,” he inquired, with forced calmness, “have you decided the question I left with you this morning?”

“I have made my choice, papa,” replied Ada. “The decision only rests with you.”

“And what is your choice, Ada?”

“It is to go with you, if you are willing, papa.”

“But have you any taste for the kind of work,

Ada, or is it to be mere mechanical drudgery for you?"

"Nothing, papa, that is my duty can be mere drudgery, I think," replied Ada, modestly. "I think I should like very well to teach."

"Then why not teach?"

"Because, papa," said Ada, laying her hand timidly upon her father's, "I want very much to be with you, and I thought—that is, I fancied—"

"What, my child? Speak freely," said her father, as she hesitated and grew confused.

"I hoped, papa, you would be happier if I were in the same position as you, and that I could be a comfort to you now dear mamma is gone."

"That is all very kind and thoughtful in you, my child," said Mr. Emory, with a strong effort to conceal his emotion, "but I cannot allow you to sacrifice—"

"No, no, papa!" exclaimed Ada, eagerly; "please do not speak of sacrifice. I *want* to go with you; it is my choice above everything else. I know I can learn the business, and I will try to be very useful."

"But think of the hard work, Ada."

"I have thought of it, papa, but I am well and strong, and like to work, you know.

"Besides, papa," she added, earnestly, "mamma always taught me it was very weak and foolish to shrink from anything that was best because it was hard."

Mr. Emory smiled.

"Well, Ada," he said, cheerfully, "you may try it. Your decision pleases me. It is just what I hoped you would make. And now we must get ready at once, for the house is to be given up in a week. We will furnish two or three rooms in a private boarding-house with some of this dear old furniture, and make them look as homelike as possible, and then we will go to work, not for ourselves alone, but for our dear Lord. But what else do you suppose I am thinking of, Ada?"

"I can't guess, papa, but it must be something very good I am sure, by the pleasant look in your eyes."

"Well, Ada, it is this. I am going to let you take your old nurse with you, if she will go. We can well afford to take care of her who has done so much for us, and for your dear mother, even though she could never do any more. And

now you may go and tell her our plans and persuade her to go with us."

Half wild with delight, Ada ran to Margaret and told her what they had decided to do, stated her father's proposal, and ended by throwing her arms around her nurse's neck and begging her not to refuse.

Poor Margaret! For weeks her heart had been almost breaking at the thought of being separated from her beloved child. Alone and in silence she had wept bitter tears over the prospect of the long dreary solitude that awaited her old age in the little lonely cottage at S——. But the unexpected joy was harder to control than the lingering grief had been. The brave woman who could rule her spirit so nobly under the pressure of a great sorrow wept like a child from excess of joy.

A year had passed over the beautiful prairies of the West since Effie Bell first looked upon their billowy vastness. It had been to her a year not only of toil and care and responsibility, but of great success. She had won golden opinions for her ability and prudence as a teacher, but her best work had been that of a Christian

laborer. One and another of her pupils had been brought to Christ by her earnest counsels and prayers, and she had seen a number of them return to their homes carrying with them the rich treasure of the Saviour's love. But one wish was still ungratified, one prayer unanswered—the wish and the prayer for the salvation of her brother.

James was not happy. His sister's letters, as well as the strong religious bent of his own thoughts, kept him keenly alive to the importance of religious things, but like many others in a similar position, he was only *almost* a Christian.

Ah, how many live and die thus! High-minded and honorable perhaps, with a sincere respect for God's word and his ordinances, yet they glide on down the deceitful current of time, till suddenly the awful crisis comes, and they drop into a dark eternity, only *almost* Christians.

James' life was exemplary, his habits scrupulously guarded; he was a careful student of the Holy Scriptures, and knew the theory of Christianity well, yet the great question of his own

salvation was still unsettled; he had learned the fatal art of procrastination.

It was a fine summer day, just while Mr. Emory and Ada were taking their sad final leave of Beech Grove, when James walked to the railroad station to welcome again, after years of separation, his old friend, Henry Adams.

"How much you are changed!" was the mutual exclamation of the two friends as they grasped each other's hands again. Henry was tall and well proportioned, and his fine face and pleasing manner had lost none of their charm by those years of social and intellectual culture. James, though two years younger, was taller than his friend, and his finely-developed form and pleasing countenance gave promise of a noble manhood.

"Why, James," cried Henry, with a bright smile, "I have almost to look up to you! I thought I had done pretty well, but I find you are quite running away from me. I must counsel Mr. Boardman to give you more hard work to do, or you will soon get fairly out of my reach."

"I see, Henry," said James, with the old love of boyhood in his tones, "that you are changed

in appearance only. You are just the same dear old fellow you always were. Send on your baggage, and let's walk up at our leisure. I am longing to talk with you."

"What are you going to do with yourself, my dear boy?" said Henry when they were alone. "Tell me all your plans. I am sure they must be pretty well matured by this time."

"No, Henry, indeed I have no plans—that is, I have nothing settled. I am still studying, mostly under private tutors. In a year I shall be well prepared for the university, but I doubt if I ever enter. As I said, I have no settled plans, but I am thinking seriously of going on as I am doing for a year or two, and then entering into business. I am getting a capital training in practical business now with Mr. Boardman, and by the time I am ready to give up study I shall be able to secure a good position."

"Well, James, whatever you do, let me advise you, as I have often done before, to 'seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.'"

"I have not forgotten that, Henry, and I want to have some first-rate talks with you

about these things. But tell me now what you intend to do."

"I intend, James, to be a missionary. I am going away, to tell the heathen about Christ and the great salvation. I hope I may be instrumental in turning some from their dumb idols to serve the living God."

"You a missionary to the heathen! Why, Henry, you are rich and talented, and an only son! Surely there are enough to go to those heathen countries who have not so much to give up as you have."

"True, I am an only son, James, but my parents long ago gave me to Christ, and they have no wish to withdraw the gift. And then, James, the more I give up for Christ, the more reason I have to rejoice. Is not Jesus the only begotten of the Father, heir of all things, by whom all things were created? and did not he give up all the glory of heaven and make himself poor and despised, 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,' and finally give up his life on the cross to redeem us? and shall I talk or think of sacrifice when I give up all things for him?"

James made no reply. His heart was too full

for words, and for some minutes they walked on in silence.

"When do you intend to go, Henry?" he inquired, at length.

"Not for some time yet. My special preparations are hardly begun. Yet I am longing to go and be about my Master's work."

"Oh, Henry, what would I not give to have a great purpose like you, something that would absorb all my thoughts and all my energies! But I am like a leaf floating upon the water, drifting aimlessly down the current, God only knows where. You are strong and settled, and have aims reaching away into the remotest future in their effects. Tell me how I may be like you."

"Not like me, James—oh no, no!—but like Jesus, who, all forgetful of self, lived and labored and suffered for others that so he might bring them to God. Make him your example, and strive to be like him in all things."

Henry remained a month in the city, and during that time the two friends were very much together. Henry strove very hard to lead his friend in the way of life, and when they parted James was fully resolved to make the salvation of his soul his first concern. But the

fatal spirit of procrastination again prevailed; weeks and months fled away, and he was even farther than ever from a decision.

Long before the autumn sun had begun to gild the beautiful foliage of Beech Grove with its varied hues, the household of Mr. Emory was dispersed, and strangers occupied their places in the old home. It was hard parting from the loved scenes, hallowed by so many precious memories, and from the graves of his loved ones, but Mr. Emory's hope had a sure anchor, and taking his child by the hand, he went forth with the tranquil spirit of one who feels that God is the Rock of his strength, and that all things, in his hands, must work together for good to those that love him.

Arrived in New York, a plain, quiet boarding-house was selected, and a small suite of rooms secured. As much of the old familiar furniture as was needed to furnish them had been removed to the city, and there, surrounded by much that reminded of the past, and with Margaret to preside over this new home and make it cheerful with her kindly ministries, Mr. Emory and Ada began a new life.

Ada was soon able to secure a place for Susan, whose grief at parting had been very great, under the same roof with themselves, and the rest of the household, with the exception of John, who purchased a small farm for himself with his well-kept earnings, found homes in the neighborhood of Beech Grove.

Mr. Emory and Ada entered upon their work with alacrity. All day they were steadily employed, but at evening they sat down together in their own quiet rooms, or arm in arm went about the great city, visiting with timely charities the dwellings of the poor, attending the sick, distributing tracts, reading and explaining the Scriptures to the ignorant and neglected, and moving on with steady step in whatever path of duty was opened to them.

The Lord's Day, too, found them always busy, and many a little wanderer was rescued from vice and degradation and brought under kindly Christian influences by their patient and untiring efforts.

Years passed on like a dream, and James Bell had reached his twenty-first birth-day. Each year had found him increasingly useful to Mr.

Boardman, who had long since given him the place of a son in his house and in his heart, and James, grateful for the disinterested kindness he had received, had waited long before he could bring himself to propose a separation.

"It's all right, my son," said Mr. Boardman when James had finally made his wish known. "You have been a great treasure to me, but you owe me nothing; you have paid for all you have ever received and much more, and now, if you choose to go, it is your privilege.

"I suppose you wish to complete your studies, and it is time for me to tell you that I have had money laid by for you ever since your sister went West. She deposited a sum with me at that time, which, with the interest it has since accumulated, will, if carefully used, suffice to carry you through your studies."

"This is quite a surprise to me, sir, and I am very grateful both to my sister and you. But I cannot use her money. If, with all the health and vigor I possess, I could not educate myself, I should not consider myself worth educating. She tells me in a letter that she has thus far spent the most of her earnings in various ways

connected with the school in which she is employed, so you see, sir, she will have the more need of this. May I beg you to forward it to her as soon as convenient, and tender her, if you please, my most grateful thanks for her sisterly kindness?"

"I am not surprised at your decision, James, and since you refuse to use the money, I shall return it to her at once. And now what plans have you for yourself?"

James proceeded to inform Mr. Boardman of his plans for the future; he seemed full of confidence in himself, and sanguine of success. Mr. Boardman looked at the young man with an expression of mingled admiration and pity.

"James," he said, earnestly, "there is one thing in the way of your real success: you lack as yet the forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. Possessing that, you could not fail of success in respect to the great results of life, even though failure should attend all your worldly plans."

James looked earnestly at his friend; he was very pale, but he did not attempt a reply.

"I know well," continued Mr. Boardman, "your many excellences, I love you for your

virtue and uprightness, but I tell you, solemnly, they will never save you from the ruin that hangs over you. The sentence of condemnation rests upon you, and unless you fly to Jesus as your all-sufficient Saviour, that sentence never can be reversed. For 'there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved but the name of Jesus.' "

Still James had no reply. He stood silent and pale, fully conscious of the truth of what he had heard. Mr. Boardman was the first to break the silence.

"If you wish it, James," he said, "I will gladly give you recommendations to businessmen in New York which will be of great use to you, and also give you a letter of introduction to my brother, a generous Christian man, who will be glad to serve you both for your own sake and for mine."

James gratefully accepted his kind offer, thanking him in a few earnest words for his faithful Christian counsel and warning. He at once set about his preparations, and in two weeks from the conversation just related he arrived in New York. Aided by the recommendations he carried, he found no difficulty in

securing a situation, and in a few months found himself established in a position of high trust and responsibility such as few young men could secure until after many years of experience and effort.

Turning resolutely from the attractions of a fashionable hotel, his first step, after securing a position, had been to seek a quiet, unpretending boarding-house. After a good deal of careful inquiry he established himself under the same roof with Mr. Emory and Ada. But as they took their meals by themselves, and seldom mingled with the other inmates of the house, months passed by, yet James never dreamt that he was so near the friends his sister loved so much, and of whose sorrows and losses he had only heard through her.





CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MISSIONARIES' DEPARTURE.

AS soon as matters of business were settled, James found out the parents of his friend Henry, who received him with the warmth of old friends.

"You are not a stranger to us, Mr. Bell," said Mrs. Adams. "Our son has felt such an interest in you, and told us so much about you, that we seem to be acquainted with you already. Call on us often, and when Henry is at home arrange to spend all your leisure time with us, if possible."

James thanked her from a full heart. Such kindness from a stranger touched him deeply. "I see," thought he as he walked away, "what has made Henry so true and earnest and unselfish. It is that noble Christian mother. She seems as unconscious of her riches as my own

dear mother was of her poverty. After all, there is nothing like Christianity. It sets the poor above their poverty and the rich above their wealth, and gives to both a dignity and nobility that are not of this world. Oh that, like Henry, I had found this treasure in my childhood! I should not now be dying of that hunger of soul which I see clearly that nothing else can satisfy. I have known too much of the power of the truth to relish the frothy pleasures of this poor world, yet not enough to have gained any conception of real joy. I stand, as it were, between two worlds, with no love for the one and no fitness for the other."

Mr. Boardman, to whom James presented his letter of introduction soon after his arrival in the city, was a modest and affable man. He had accumulated a large fortune, and, weary of the perplexities of business, had retired some years before, and was leading a quiet life, devoting much of his time to unobtrusive benevolence and gentle charities.

He received James with great cordiality, and gave him the warmest assurance of friendship. "You have been my brother's right arm so

long," he said, "that I hardly see how he is to get along without you. But you, young man, have your own plans, and it is but right you should. We were young men, too, not very long ago, it seems to me, and like you had to hew out our own way, so we have both always felt a strong interest in those young men who, with a right, earnest purpose and with honest hearts, are beginning the battle of life.

"But come to the drawing-room," he added, rising; "my daughter is at home, and she will be glad to see you."

James would gladly have excused himself, but the kind old man would not hear a word, and taking him by the arm, led him away.

"Myra," he said, entering the richly-furnished drawing-room where his daughter was sitting, "allow me to introduce to you Mr. Bell, the young man your uncle has told us so much about. He has come to our city to reside, and we must make him our fast friend, if possible."

Miss Boardman received him with easy politeness. She was very beautiful, and her cultivated manners and sprightly conversation made a deep impression upon James, and he went away feeling that he had spent one of the pleasantest hours of

his life. From that day his visits at the house of Mr. Boardman were frequent. The cordiality of the father and the fascinations of the daughter wove a spell around his heart that was irresistible. Without questioning much the nature of his interest in Miss Boardman, he sought her society more and more, and it was not until he was informed, one day when he called, that she had returned to school, that he became conscious of the hold she had already gained upon his affections.

Mr. Boardman had, from the first, been pleased with James. His handsome person and grave dignity of manner had won his admiration, and acquaintance had only deepened the impressions at first formed.

Myra Boardman, unlike her father, was narrow-minded and selfish, extravagant, and fond of dissipating pleasures. Her childhood had been carefully guarded from injurious influences, but, passionate and vain, as she grew up she had disappointed the hopes of her parents, who, finally, hoping to secure that discipline abroad which they were unable to enforce at home, had placed her at school in a distant city, where,

under the charge of faithful and judicious teachers, no pains had been spared to make her all they could desire. But in spite of care and discipline, her imperious temper and love of dissipation had only increased with years, and her parents had been shocked on her return home to find that, instead of being better, she had really grown worse. But her father hoped that the influence of such a man as James would do much toward correcting her faults, and therefore he secretly rejoiced at their growing intimacy.

Myra, too, was evidently gratified at the attentions of her father's favorite. She admired his person, and her vanity was gratified at being able to number him among her admirers, but it was a paltry love of admiration, rather than any real affection, which prompted the flattering encouragement she gave to his advances.

A year passed rapidly away; Miss Boardman's school-days were done, and she was again at home. Her return was to be the occasion of a grand party to be given on her birth-day, and no pains were to be spared to make it one of the most splendid of the season. Her parents

sighed at the prodigious expenditure, but they fondly hoped that, when that one scene of extravagant gayety was past, she would show her gratitude for their indulgence by endeavoring to conform her tastes and wishes to theirs, and finally become a comfort to their old age.

Henry Adams, too, was at home. In another year his preparations would be finished, and then he was to go forth to enter upon his great life-work.

James did not conceal from his friend his partiality for Miss Boardman, but was surprised and disappointed to find that he looked upon her with dislike and dread.

"I tell you, James," he said, earnestly, "you are making a grievous mistake. My words may seem cold and unsympathizing, but you will find, when perhaps it is too late, that they are true."

James was displeased, but he loved his friend too truly to resent a faithfulness which he knew was prompted by the warmest affection, and giving him his hand, he said, with a grave smile, "I forgive you this once, Henry, but if you value my friendship, do not speak again in this manner of one I so sincerely esteem."

"I knew you would forgive me, James," said

Henry, grasping the proffered hand, "and if I have wounded you, it has been to save you from a lifelong pain. We will talk no more of this, but I shall pray God to save you from the ruin upon which you are rushing."

"You may spare yourself the trouble!" retorted James, his eyes flashing with sudden anger; but in a moment his better feelings triumphed, and taking both his friend's hands in his, he said in a subdued tone: "Henry, I love you almost more than myself. You have been the dearest, truest of friends, but unless you cease to speak lightly of one I honor as I do Miss Boardman, we must cease to be friends. I will not suffer it even from you."

"I have done, then," said Henry, sorrowfully. "You and I must never cease to love each other, James. But tell me, are you going to this party?"

"I am. Are you going?"

"No, James, I have no relish for such scenes. I was going to ask you to spend the evening with me, but I suppose it is useless."

"I have promised to be there. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, James!" and the friends parted, Henry to pray in solitude for his friend, and

James to prepare for the heartless splendors of the evening.

Miss Boardman's preparations were known to be on a grand scale, but when the magnificent drawing-rooms were thrown open to guests even the most extravagant of the company were amazed at the splendor of the scene.

James was amongst the earliest arrivals, and as his eyes lingered upon the charming face and form of the young heiress he almost hated his friend, for the moment, for what he believed an unjust and groundless dislike. "I shall yet convince him," he thought, "that his remarks are as unjust to her as they are unkind to me. No one with such grace of person and gentleness of manner could deserve the censure he has so freely passed upon her."

Hours passed away like a dream. James was in universal favor. His brain was giddy with pleasure, and it was not until he was asked by a lady to take a glass of wine that he awoke to a sense of danger. He took the glass with a hesitating manner, reddened, turned pale, and finally set it down, saying as he did so, "I never take wine, Miss Norton."



Ada Emory.

"Never take wine!" exclaimed the lady, with affected surprise. "You surely don't mean it! My dear Miss Boardman," she continued as her friend approached the table, "here is a gentleman who says he never takes wine: did you ever hear of such an oddity? Do join your entreaties to mine; it is so unsocial to refuse."

"Mr. Bell, oblige me," said Miss Boardman, lifting the glass, and turning toward James with a bright smile, as if conscious of her power. "You will surely not refuse me!"

"Pardon me, Miss Boardman!" said James, much confused; "if you will allow me a glass of water—"

"Water! never, Mr. Bell, on my birth-day! Give me health and happiness," she added, persuasively, touching the glass with her own lips and then extending it to James.

He was deadly pale, but he took the glass, and raising it slowly toward his lips, said in a low tone, "Health, happiness, long life to you, Miss Boardman!" But a sharp pang smote his heart; his mother's imploring face seemed to sweep before his vision, and without tasting the wine he replaced the glass upon the table.

"Mr. Bell, this is only a mockery! Will you not drink to me on this evening—the anniversary of my birth-day, the first after my return home?"

"Not in this wine, Miss Boardman! There is a promise recorded in heaven—a promise made to my dying mother—never to taste wine as a beverage. I shall, God helping me, keep my promise!"

Miss Boardman stood for a moment gazing into the proud, resolute face before her, and then in a low voice she asked, "Is this final?"

"Final, Miss Boardman."

"I bid you good-night, then," she said, bowing; "you will please not speak to me again;" and taking the arm of her friend, she swept loftily away, leaving him standing alone.

Half an hour later James entered the parlor of his own boarding-house, and casting himself into a chair, he swept back the damp hair from his brow, and for some minutes remained motionless.

"I can't endure it!" he exclaimed, at length, starting to his feet. "She is my idol, and I have lost her because of that silly pledge! Fool

that I am! Oh, my mother, my mother! what have I not lost by adhering to that fatal pledge!"

"What have you not gained, rather?" said a low voice, and a gentleman advanced from a retired part of the room, where he had been sitting unobserved. "Pardon me, sir!" he continued; "I have been an unintentional listener to your words, but if I have understood them aright, I must still say, What have you not gained? You have been tempted by one you love, you have resisted temptation through a solemn pledge made to a dear mother. You have gained a victory over yourself and been true to your manhood. What more do you want? The man who can do that may laugh at consequences: he is above them, no matter how trying they may at first seem."

"I am sorry to have kept you waiting, papa," said a pleasant voice at the door, "but I am ready at last."

"Stay, sir," said James as the stranger turned to go; "your words have given me strength. May I ask your name?"

"My name is Emory," replied the gentleman. "I must know you better, but my business is urgent just now. May God strengthen you to

walk upright amid the temptations of this great city and this evil world!" and with a kind pressure of the hand, Mr. Emory was gone.

"I wonder if it can be my sister's old friend?" mused James as Mr. Emory and Ada passed on; but his heart was too sore to think long of any—think but his own care, and retiring to his room, he walked the floor in painful agitation.

"It is indeed time," thought he, "that I had some sure standing ground. Here I have been to-night, in spite of warning and advice, following a heartless tempter—one who could set a higher value upon the paltry triumph of seducing a man from his uprightness to yield to what might be his ruin than upon all the dignity and integrity of one who could stand firm in his conviction of right.

"‘Dignity and integrity!’" he repeated, bitterly, after a moment's reflection; "what dignity and integrity of mine can I boast of in this matter? Had I not the glass to my lips? Was I not about to sip the fatal draught? It is well to talk loftily of ‘dignity and integrity,’ I who have been wasting my time and energies upon unsatisfying vanities, suffering myself to be drawn on and on in the giddy whirl of folly to

the very verge of ruin! One step more, one little step, and my fate would have been sealed! That pledge once broken, I am ruined. I know it well. I know my slumbering appetite as no one else knows it. If at fifteen it needed a cry from the lips of death to stay the downward course of the boy, what would be needed to arrest the man?—the hidden fires of a slumbering appetite rekindled, and honor, self-respect, and manhood cast to the dust? And what was it that restrained me? What held my arm? what kept me from taking that one fatal step? *It was God!*"

James started and looked around him. Had God been so near? Had God held his arm? Had God, whose aid he had long since almost ceased to invoke, really delivered him from the fatal snare? He buried his face in his hands and wept. Old memories of a mother's prayers and counsel, of the faithful warnings of his kind employer, his sister's urgent appeals, the exhortations of his dearest friend, and the solemn declarations of God's word, came back like a flood upon him. The long, sinful, almost fatal, procrastination of so many years, his proud rejection of his friend's advice, his late indifference

to God's word and carelessness of his service,—all started up before him with mute reproaches, and he had not a word to say.

The night wore away at last, and weary of tossing upon a sleepless bed, he arose and flung open his window. The sun had already risen, and the roofs and spires of the great city were flashing back his rejoicing rays. The window beneath his was open, and a soft, musical voice from within reached his ear. He leaned forward and listened. The lady who was reading was sitting near her window, and with a clear, distinct utterance was reading the fourth chapter of Hebrews. James listened, attracted chiefly by the sweetness of the voice, but gradually, as she went on, his interest deepened. There was a slight movement in the room, and the reading ceased for a moment, and then he heard as though he had never heard before :

“‘Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto

the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' ”

The words were not new to James. He had read and pondered them many a time, but they came to him with a new force, and as the voice of prayer rose from the hushed room beneath he closed his eyes and bowed his head as in the presence of that great High Priest who had never seemed to him so near, so real, so present a help, as at that moment.

The prayer was fervent and full of tenderness—a prayer specially for the tempted, that he who, in his sad sojourning among men, had met and overcome all the temptations to which his weak followers are exposed, would succor the tempted and deliver them from all their perils. James felt that the prayer was for him, and as the heart of the pleader warmed with his petition his own heart melted in penitence before God; the great deep of apathy and unbelief was broken up, and tears gathered fast and thick under the closed eyelids and fell in great drops to the ground.

The prayer ceased, and then the sound of soft fingers upon the keys of a piano was heard, and a rich female voice sang, in tones which the

listener felt were more of heaven than earth, the following

HYMN TO JESUS.

Dear Lamb of God,
Thy hands, and feet, and side, were pierced for me!
For me the rod
Of thy loved Father's wrath was laid on thee!

Thou hadst no sin
For which to die in anguish on the tree;
It was to win
Life from the dead—eternal life for me!

And didst thou die,
O patient Saviour! on the bloody cross,
In agony,
Me to redeem from endless woe and loss?

I come to thee,
For thou dost bid me come, O dying Lamb!
Oh, pity me,
Accept and save me, sinful though I am!

I trust in thee!
Thou takest all my grief, and giv'st me rest!
So shall I be,
For evermore, safe sheltered on thy breast!

The music ceased, and with eyes all undried from the precious rain of a broken and contrite heart, James descended, and gently tapping at the door from which the sounds had risen, was

admitted. With no apology or excuse, he sat down and asked that the chapter might be read and the hymn sung again for him. Ada opened the Bible—the dear old Bible hallowed by so many precious memories—and read again the sacred words that speak of our blessed High Priest, “tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;” and then, in tones all tremulous with the fullness of her own emotion, she sang the hymn again.

Then, as if with one consent, they all knelt down, and Mr. Emory once more poured forth his heart in prayer. There was a solemn pause when he concluded, and then James followed. The petition was at first low and broken, but gradually the words of supplication were changed to praise, and he rose from his knees with a new song in his mouth, “even praise unto our God.”

But little more remains to be told. A friendship thus formed was not soon to end, and James found with the family his sister loved so much his best ideal of human worth and Christian excellence fully realized. Henry Adams rejoiced with more than a brother’s joy over his

friend, and a new tie was added to the warm love of boyhood—a tie which was to endure, strong and ever-strengthening, when all merely human ties are for ever dissolved.

With characteristic earnestness, James was not long in making the hearts of God's people glad by a humble confession of his faith in Jesus. He was baptized in the name of Jesus, and then, with the meekness of a true disciple, he gave himself heart and hand to the work of his Lord.

There was a day of thanksgiving in the academy where Effie had labored so long when news came that her beloved brother was converted to God, and Effie, with a fullness of joy such as she had never felt before, gave herself up in a more exalted consecration to her Saviour and his service.

Months passed away, and James had never once seen Miss Boardman, and the fair face of the lovely tempter had almost faded from his thoughts. He had not called during all this time on Mr. Boardman. At length, one day, as he was turning down a street, he met him face to face.

"Why, James," said the old man, "have you forsaken me for so many months? I have been ill, and have wished often and often to see you. And why did you leave so abruptly on the evening of my daughter's party?"

"Do you not know, sir?"

"No; I heard my daughter say you took offence at something, but she seemed unwilling to tell what, and I did not press her. I would not send for you, for I felt hurt that you should forsake me on account of some love quarrel with the girl."

"It was no love quarrel, sir," said James, reddening, "but, as I cannot tell you about it without giving you pain, we will let it pass and talk of something else."

"No, no, I must hear," replied the old man, and leading James to a more retired place, where they could talk unobserved, he listened attentively to the whole recital.

"You were right," he said when James had finished, "and I honor and admire your conduct. I shall soon be done with this world," he added, with a sigh, "and I had hoped— But no matter. Think of me when I am gone, and may God have you ever in his holy keeping!"

Miss Boardman waited a full year for the return of James. Finally she sent him a letter desiring him to come back and be reconciled to her, but his only reply was a brief note saying that a renewal of friendship was no longer desired.

It is a lovely day in October, and a great concourse of people has met to witness the departure of a noble ship in which a few earnest men and women are to sail for a distant heathen land, there to publish Christ to the dark-minded idolaters.

Nearest the boat that is about to push off with its precious burden is a group of persons, nearly all of whom we know. That noble-looking, middle-aged gentleman is the father of Henry Adams, one of the missionaries that have just taken their place in the boat, and that lady on his arm with a face so full of tearful joy is the young missionary's mother, waiting to take the last look of her only son as he goes forth to the great work to which God has called him.

Here, arm in arm with his daughter, a plainly-dressed lady, with mild, dark eyes and a sweet, intellectual face, stands Mr. Emory. His hair

is gray, and his form is slightly bent, but his face is radiant with a higher and purer happiness than earth can yield, and his eyes glisten with tears of Christian love and sympathy, as he waits to take a last look of the missionaries, and wave a last adieu as they pass from sight on their long and perilous voyage.

The young man that stands near him with his head bared and his eyes brimming with tears is James Bell, and the frail old man who leans upon his arm with a look of such saintly peace upon his placid face is our old friend the basket-maker, whom Ada has brought to the city for his annual visit earlier than usual, that he may witness the sailing of the missionaries.

It is his last visit. He will never return to the little cottage where he has so long dwelt alone. He has taken his last look of it; his work is almost done, and the gentle hand of her whom many years ago he thanked God for preserving alive will soon close his eyes in their last quiet sleep.

That gentle-faced, elderly woman is Margaret, still, as ever, Ada's fond and faithful friend and gentle counselor, and the strong, vigorous woman beside her is Susan, as loving and unselfish in

her Christian life as she was once harsh and headstrong in her earthly life.

And now the moment has come, the ship is gained, the white sails flutter in the breeze, hands are waved in mute adieus, and those are rapidly borne away to their Master's work beyond the deep, while these return to their various spheres of duty, patiently and faithfully to perform their allotted tasks, until, one by one, they shall be gathered home, to be for ever with the Lord.



